

HULL DOWN

Reminiscences of Wind-jammers
Troops and Travellers

SIR BERTRAM HAYES
K.C.M.G., D.S.O.



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HULL DOWN



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SIR BERTRAM HAYES, K.C.M.G., D.S.O.
In the Uniform of Captain, R.N.R.

Hull Down & *Reminiscences*
of Wind-jammers, Troops and Travellers
By SIR BERTRAM HAYES, K.C.M.G., D.S.O.
Commodore of the White Star Line

With Eight Plates



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ALL MY FRIENDS AFLOAT AND ASHORE

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CHAPTER I

SOME GENERAL REFLECTIONS OF FORTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE

HULL down! The ship on the horizon, outward bound. A thousand times I have stood on that ship, thought of those standing on the shore watching us disappear over the edge, then turned to the company of travellers and, with them, lost myself in the routine and bustle of the trip.

Now retirement. As I write, here where the Atlantic swells beneath the *Majestic*—the largest ship the world has seen—we are once again hull down to the Homeland, and I have the feeling that also the ship of my own affairs is hull down too. The adventures of the sea, most of the adventures of life are behind me, and I sail to the Islands of Peace after storm and strife, laughter and high adventuring.

Hull down on my last round voyage in command. I shall never again have beneath my hand the control of what is a young city afloat. As I pass on, perhaps you will be interested in the memories that come to me of many voyages, many experiences, many travellers.

Those memories go back more than forty-four years, and I suppose I may claim to speak with some authority on the Merchant Service.

On one or two things I should, at the outset, like to speak frankly. A sailorman doesn't like beating about the bush. So before I hark back to my early days in

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the old wind-jammers, I would like to put forward a few opinions I have formed as a result of my years of actual experience—hull down.

For many years the merchant ship was a matter of small account in the public mind. It was a thing of boys' tales, part of a lower stratum of life than that of everyday doings on land. Sailors, in the popular view, were drunkards and wastrels, and only those who could not fit jobs ashore took jobs afloat. They were the world's beachcombers.

It was the Great War that brought the merchantmen's stock up towards par—and now the glasses have ceased to be focused on them by the bounds of a national view, I wonder how far that stock has again depreciated. The workers and the business men, the professor and the housewife once again find no threat to their very existence because ships carrying their country's food failed to make port, thanks to the ubiquitous U-boat. And so again the Service has, in interest, slipped over the horizon. But during the vital years of the war there is no doubt that British trading ships played a very large part in the general organization of the country, which eventually made for success, both in their work of conveying troops and in keeping up, despite the extensive sinking campaign of the enemy, a sufficient supply of food.

It was in those dark days that we were told we were the saviours of our country, and that the war could not be carried on without us.

I am quite sure, speaking generally, that we were not unduly elated by this form of flattery. We carried on, doing our work to the best of our ability with depleted numbers, as most of those of us, officers and men, who belonged to the Royal Naval Reserve had been mobilized into the Navy at the outbreak of war, where I am proud to think they took their part with credit to themselves and to the Service they had left.

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Seeing that such a fuss had been made over us while the war was in progress, some of us thought that when it was over the Merchant Service would receive the recognition that everybody said it deserved, and that in the future it would take its part in the national life of the country, but apparently it has again faded into the background of people's thoughts, and I suppose it will need another national emergency to bring it back, like Kipling's "Thin red line of 'eroes when the drums begin to roll."

One would think that when any celebration of a national character takes place, or a royal visit to a sea-port town, representatives of the Merchant Service would be invited to take a part as a matter of course, as the Army and Navy are, but I am afraid that it is only after pressure has been brought to bear on the organizers of such events by the secretaries of the various societies connected with that Service, that invitations are issued to them. They are, in my humble opinion, then not worth having, though the secretaries are quite within their rights in pressing for them.

The following will illustrate my point. My ship was in New York when the Armistice was declared, and I happened to hear, through a friend of mine who was attached to the British War Mission there, that a Thanksgiving Service had been arranged by them, in conjunction with our Naval people stationed there, at Trinity Church. I asked him if the Merchant Service had been notified of their intention.

"No," he replied, "we never thought of them, but I will see what I can do in the matter."

I was staying in the country at the time, and he afterwards told me that a hurry-up call had been sent out to the ships on the morning the service had taken place, but whether anyone from them had turned up he could not say, as no special seats in the church had been reserved for their use. "It was too late to arrange for that."

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I must mention another matter of a more serious nature, asking my readers to remember that I have had eight years' experience in the Transport Service—three during the South African War and five during the late war. It is this: I venture to think that the time has now come for the direction and supervision of transport to be transferred from the retired Naval officers who have had charge of it hitherto, to the Merchant Service, who would certainly run it more economically and, I dare say, more efficiently than has been the case up to now.

In the South African War days there were a few Naval officers concerned with this Service who were not on the retired list, but even they had no idea of economy, as was instanced by the harbour at Cape Town—Table Bay—being full of ships lying at anchor “eating their heads off,” while others were being engaged at home to take the troops out instead of those lying there being sent home for the purpose.

One day, when I happened to be in the Principal Transport Officer's office there, the captain of a collier lying at anchor in the bay came in to give notice that his ship would be on demurrage next day, her lay days having expired.

“And how much will it cost, Captain, to keep your ship on demurrage?” he was asked by the P.T.O.'s secretary.

A modest sum was named, and he was told by the secretary to go back on board his ship and not to worry. “We are dealing in millions,” said the secretary airily. And so they were, with no thought for economy.

No one has a higher opinion of the Royal Navy at its own particular job than I have, and that opinion is general throughout the Merchant Service. Of course, we have our own views about Naval things. Being seamen, it is only natural that we should have. It might, in passing, be of interest to record the opinion held by most merchant

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officers concerning the naval engagement that caused most controversy during the war. I mean Jutland. In all the ships of the world I suppose that battle has been discussed, and it may be of interest to Lord Jellicoe to know that nearly all of us think his conduct on that occasion was correct. This is not the place to enter into details, but I will say it always seemed to me that the one unanswerable fact was this: after the battle the British fleet was still in existence. Therefore the country was well guarded and safe. A scatterbrain adventure in the North Sea *might* have wiped out the German fleet. Also it might have met such disaster as would have opened our coasts. Any really wise commander, a commander worthy of guiding the British Navy, with such a responsibility as lay on Lord Jellicoe that night, would have done what Lord Jellicoe did.

But this is perhaps outside my present scope; what I wish to say here is that our admiration for the Navy does not run to the length of admitting that it can do our work better than we can ourselves. So when retired officers of that Service are given charge of work for which our training particularly fits us, and of which they cannot have had any experience, I think we have just cause for complaint. Rather the taxpayers have, for it is their money that is squandered.

In the Royal Navy, of course, the ships have to be kept fully manned and in a high state of efficiency at all times, and it does not matter really whether they are in harbour or at sea, so far as expense is concerned. In their case this cannot be taken into account in time of war—they have necessarily to be ready for anything at any time.

With merchant ships it is different. They have to be sent to sea again as quickly as possible in order to get full value for the money the country is paying for them. Yet I have heard Transport Officers say, when it has been

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mildly suggested to them that idle ships are wasteful: "What does it matter? We are paying for them!"

In many cases our work was carried on in spite of them, rather than with their aid, and I am afraid that many of the ships would never have got to sea had their orders been carried out to the letter.

A "classic" instance of this happened when some motor-cars had to be shipped. The steamer in question had her fore-holds full of cargo, and there was no room for the cars when they arrived alongside. The Transport Officer in charge blustered that they must be put on board. He looked down one of the after-holds.

"Take that thing out and there will be plenty of room," he ordered.

"You can't take that out, sir, that's the tunnel," the Chief Officer of the ship said.

"I don't care a damn what it is—take it out!" was the reply.

On further explanation being given, even he realized that the ship could not go to sea without the shaft to which her propellor was fixed, which passed through the tunnel he had ordered to be removed!

One patriotic old gentleman, who had retired from the Royal Navy as a lieutenant in 1875, was, on one occasion, the Transport Officer who was supposed to be responsible for the ship of which I then had command being got ready for sea by a certain date; it was not reasonable to suppose that he could be capable of doing it, yet we did not want to hurt his feelings by telling him so. When he first came on board, I told him that he could rely on the ship's people to see that everything was in order, and that I would keep him posted as to the details of the progress of the work that was going on, so that he could make his daily report to the Principal Transport Officer.

He made his report and apparently was asked if he

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had seen everything for himself; truthfully, he replied that he had not.

The ship was moored in the river at the time, and when I was going off in the tender to her next morning, he came to me and said that he would like me to give him somebody to take him all over the ship as he wanted to see everything for himself. Our chief troop-deck steward happened to be close by at the time, so I told him to report to me in the office as soon as he had changed into uniform.

I piloted the Transport Officer up to room C53 (the office) with many stops on the way to allow him to recover his breath, and when we got there I saw that he was practically exhausted by climbing so many stairs, so suggested some "refreshment." He gratefully accepted.

I then asked him what it was he particularly wanted to see, and he replied: "The hammocks—to find out whether they really need washing or not." We had asked for this to be done.

The troop-deck steward turned up now, and I suggested that he should pick a dozen or so hammocks haphazard from the piles of them that were in readiness to be sent on shore, and spread them out in the companion-way for his inspection. He agreed, and after he had looked them over, decided one way or the other, I forget which, and we returned to C53.

After a few minutes' further conversation he said: "Captain, my dear wife, about this hour, usually brings me a gin-and-bitters. I had an excellent cocktail on this ship yesterday. Do you think I could get one now?"

I said, "Certainly," and rang the bell. Then, as the Officers' Mess was a long distance away, suggested that as the steward's legs were younger than ours, we might as well have our lunch brought to us.

After we had finished I excused myself, saying that I had some matters that required my attention.

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I really thought I had wasted enough of my time on him. He asked for some notepaper, which was provided, and I left, saying that I would come for him in ample time to catch the four o'clock tender back to the landing stage.

On my return, probably two hours later, he was putting stamps on his letter, and exclaimed with evident satisfaction: "I've done a good day's work. Had an excellent lunch. Written a long letter to my wife, and have never moved out of my chair. Good business!"

He was a dear old gentleman, but hardly fitted for the position to which he had been appointed. I have not written this for the purpose of poking fun at him, but simply to illustrate the point I have raised—that Merchant Service officers are more fitted to run merchant ships than retired Naval officers.

There were many cases, too, that were common knowledge at the time, and freely commented on, where ships that were fully loaded with outward cargo were ordered to have their cargoes discharged, simply because some Transport Officer wanted that particular ship, while all the time others that were offered would have suited equally well.

My suggested remedy for the state of affairs that existed then, should the necessity ever arise again (which God forbid) would be, that a Board of Shipowners, representative of every class of steamer should be placed in charge of the Transport Service, with one of their number in the Cabinet as Minister of Shipping Affairs.

They would appoint liaison officers between them and the Navy and Army, or the Services would appoint their own men to act as such.

The board would appoint their Marine, Engineering and Victualling Superintendents at each port concerned, both at home and abroad, to look after the upkeep of the ships, and the loading and discharging of them, and I

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venture to say that the service would be carried on with less confusion and at infinitely less cost to the country.

The Royal Navy, it goes without saying, would still be responsible for the safety of the ships at sea, and would issue their sailing orders, as heretofore, but the actual handling of them, as regards the embarkation of the troops, and their equipment, would be looked after by the Merchant Service.

Exception will be taken to this by some who will say that it is the shipowners' business to make money, and that they would take advantage of the country's need in order to do so.

There are "black sheep" amongst them, I suppose, as in every profession, but if such men as Mr. Ismay, Mr. Sanderson (to mention first those whom I know best), Lord Inchcape, Sir Alan Anderson, Sir Thomas Royden, and others whom I could name, were placed at the head of the Transport Service, there would be no fear of that. Indeed, without question, they would be better able to keep the more rapacious members of the fraternity in check than has been the case up to now.

If this had been done previous to the late war, not only would the Transport Service have benefited, but the shipowners' legitimate business—which after all is the country's business at such a time—would have been carried on more efficiently. There would have been no ships running about the Mediterranean taking chances of being torpedoed—many of them were—without anybody in authority apparently knowing where they were wanted; nor would there have been ships loaded and again discharged unnecessarily at home ports as actually occurred during that period.

It would be a comparatively easy matter to get the nucleus of some such organization together in time of peace, so that it would be ready to function on the outbreak of another war, if such a thing were to happen.

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The leading steamship organizations of the country, such as the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association, might be asked to nominate some of their members to arrange the details of it.

The Admiralty Transport Regulations under which we worked would need to be scrapped and new ones drawn up, as they are not applicable to ships of to-day. One would think from a perusal of them that they were drawn up during the Crimean War for sailing ships, and had been slightly revised after the experience gained in the South African War, but they are still very much involved and contradictory.

While I am in the critical vein there are two items I think of national importance concerning which I ought, in fairness, to say a word or two.

One concerns the matter of wireless. We limp behind the world in providing wireless aids to navigation—we who have the greatest Navy and the greatest merchant fleet, we who more than any other country have to use the sea for business upon which we depend for the very food which keeps us alive.

I feel very strongly on this point. When I see other countries, especially the United States and France, utilizing the latest discoveries of science to provide the greatest possible security for their ships in bad weather, I cannot avoid feeling in regard to whoever is responsible, that Lord Fisher's phrase should apply—"sack the lot." Even our own colonies are ahead of us. Ports there, as well as in France and the United States, are covered by Wireless Direction Finding Stations, which give ships reliable positions in thick or doubtful weather.

The excuse—I can call it nothing else—offered by our authorities when approached on this subject, is that wireless direction finding is still in the experimental stage. They refer to the two or three stations that are established round our coasts, and mention an experimental one at

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Niton, on the Isle of Wight, presumably to show that they have the matter under consideration. They say that it is undesirable, from motives of economy, to add more until the usefulness of those established is assured.

Isolated stations will never establish their usefulness to the full extent, though they serve to keep ships clear of the particular point they are on, and of others in its immediate vicinity. What is wanted is two, or preferably three, stations covering the entrance to each port, as is the case in Canada and the United States, with France following quickly in their wake. Their existence proves that wireless direction finding has passed the experimental stage years ago, and has come into general use in other countries; surely it ought to have done so in ours by now. It might almost as well be said that wireless itself is only in the experimental stage.

It is not as though the instruments are very costly. The value of one ship saved from going on shore by the use of them would cover their cost for years.

There seems to be some influence working against their adoption by us that I have not been able to fathom. I have been told by officials of the Marconi Company—junior officials, I admit—that it is our Navy that is against them, in case they would be of assistance to enemy ships in time of war. But surely they could be put under control or out of action at such a time in short orders? Lately, when Admiral Sir Montague Browning was travelling with me (I hope he will forgive me for quoting him), he assured me that the Navy was in favour of them, and blamed the Post Office authorities. But surely *they* ought to be the first to press for their establishment in sufficient numbers to be of real use, for they would be the first to benefit through the acceleration of the landing of the foreign mails. If we had the assistance of such stations in making port during doubtful weather many hours would often be saved.

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As a matter of national pride, we ought to have them, if for no other reason. I mentioned in one of the letters I wrote, asking for a wireless beacon to be established on the Nab Tower, that it was only through the courtesy of France that I was enabled to get a position to make the Tower during a fog without losing a considerable amount of time. I thought that might stir the official mind up a bit, but it only brought forth the stereotyped reply to which I have already referred.

On that occasion, the Cherbourg station had given me a bearing, which, used in conjunction with the one I obtained from the "experimental" station at Niton, gave me a good position, which I, of course, verified by the use of the lead before proceeding. I may mention that all bearings are given free of cost to the ship asking for them by the Canadian and United States stations, which is not the case with the few that we have.

Wireless beacons which send out a special signal at short intervals denoting which light vessel is sending it, are established on all the United States light vessels we pass on our way into New York, and ships that are fitted with wireless direction finding instruments pick their signals up, and so are guided past them with absolute accuracy.

Great Britain has two such beacons. One is on Inchkeith Island in the Firth of Forth, and is "experimental," like the Niton Station. Very few merchant ships pass that way. The other is on the Bar Light Vessel, at the entrance to the River Mersey, and was presented to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board by the Marconi Company. This must be of great assistance to the ships fitted with wireless direction finders that frequent the Port of Liverpool, though I have had no experience of it myself, not having entered the port since it was established.

These beacons cost even less than the stations I have previously mentioned, and as they are automatic, no extra



THE MAJESTIC IN DRY DOCK AT BOSTON, U.S.A.

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staff is required to run them, and the cost of upkeep is negligible.

Now, at the moment of retirement I make an especial plea for the establishment in considerable numbers of these stations. They are essential, and if words of mine should hasten their provision, I know of no greater boon I would crave to be granted for my shipmates of the Service.

Then there is the matter of docks. Again the largest fleet of ships, the largest ship in the world, and we have to go to Boston for dry-docking!

The *Majestic* has been in dry dock three times, always at Boston, not because the ship had met with any accident—it would have been natural to make use of the nearest dry dock in such circumstances—but for the purpose of undergoing the periodical survey to satisfy the British Board of Trade as to the condition of the bottom of the ship and other details that are not visible afloat.

It was in 1923, there being no dock in Great Britain large enough, that the Board of Trade sent out one of their surveyors with us to make the necessary examination at Boston before they would renew the ship's "Passenger Certificate." This says a good deal for the care taken by the Board of Trade, but very little for the country that prides itself on taking the lead in mercantile affairs not having a dry dock capable of accommodating the ships belonging to her.

The three times the *Majestic* has had to go to Boston for this purpose meant enormous expense to her owners, to say nothing of the risk incurred in taking her to and from Boston, mostly in fog. Think of the money that would have been spent in England, instead of in the United States, had a dry dock been available there!

The Gladstone Dock at Liverpool could have taken her, had it been in commission, as it was during the war, but the temporary entrance to it from the river had been allowed to silt up and the expense of dredging it to suffi-

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cient depth to allow the *Majestic* to enter would have been very great, and would have had to be borne by her owners.

It is only fair to say that when the new system of docks, which are in course of construction at the North End of the line of docks, are completed, Liverpool will have a dry dock capable of accommodating a larger ship even than the *Majestic*, should anyone ever be found willing to build such, which I very much doubt.

There is a floating dock now at Southampton which this ship will be able to use. It was opened by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on June 27, 1924.

The large dry dock at Boston was originally planned and work commenced on it through commercial enterprise, but it was taken over by the United States Navy and completed under its supervision as a war measure. This seems to point to the fact that the Americans, in their zeal to acquire a "Merchant Marine," are looking far ahead, while I am sorry to say, the contrary is the case with us. The dock companies are always far behind the shipowners in their enterprise, and this has always been so during the time I have been at sea.

CHAPTER II

NOW AND THEN

THERE has been a good deal of talk lately about the lack of discipline in the Merchant Service. Questions have even been asked in Parliament on the subject, and I remember one Naval officer who was on passage home in the *Olympic* from Mudros in 1915, in commenting on it, remarked that it would take them twelve months after the war to get the discipline back into the Navy that had been upset by the R.N.R. men who were then serving in it. It took us about that length of time to get the R.N.R. men back into our ways on their return to us, owing to their having forgotten how to do a decent day's work while they were in that Service!

I can only speak of this matter from my own experience of over forty-four years at sea, nearly ten of which I served in sailing ships, and the rest in the service of the White Star Line. From that I can truthfully say that I have seen very little cause for such talk.

I may have been peculiarly fortunate in the men I have sailed under, and also in the officers and men who have sailed under me during that period. That I cannot say definitely, but I can say that I only recall one occasion in which the men did not respond readily to any call that has been made on them in an emergency, and in that instance, their failure to respond was caused by fear rather than lack of discipline.

The incident happened when I was Second Mate of the barque *Loch Cree*, of Liverpool. We were running, under low sail, before a southerly "buster" up the coast of

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Tasmania bound for Sydney, N.S.W. A very high following sea was running at the time, and she shipped one right over the poop, which carried away the wheel and broke the rudder-post in the trunkway.

She commenced to broach to, and when I shouted for the men to brace the foreyards up to check her, there was no response. It was not until the Chief Mate—who had rushed on deck when his room was flooded by the sea—the three apprentices and myself had succeeded in getting the yards braced up, that we had leisure to find out where the watch on deck were, and to tell them what we thought of their conduct.

They were "Squareheads"—as all Northern European sailors, bar the British, and if I remember rightly, the Russians, were called in those days—so that incident cannot be charged against the British Merchant Service, as the men should never have been allowed to serve in it. British ships for British seamen ought to have been the rule.

Sailors, no doubt, used to run wild a little when they got on shore, and do so yet—to a lesser degree perhaps—and sometimes fail to join their ships at the proper hour when sailing day comes, and often desert from them in foreign ports. But that is not confined to the Merchant Service. I have heard of Naval ships losing a considerable number of their crews in foreign ports, especially in those of the United States of America, and of pickets being sent out at home ports to round up those members of their crews who have overstayed their leave when their ships were ready for sea.

This goes to show that the fear of punishment is not the controlling influence with the men, so I doubt very much whether an increase of the penalties we are allowed to inflict by the Merchant Shipping Act would have the effect expected by those who advocate it.

The best way to maintain discipline, on a passenger

Now and Then

steamer at any rate, and I should say in all others, is by example—endeavouring to get everybody on board to pull together for the general good of the ship. This can only be done by carrying out one's own duties strictly, and respecting every man's position in the ship, giving a word of praise when men do well and pointing out where they could do better when the occasion arises.

In this way you get everybody interested in the smooth running of the ship, and when you get people interested in their work they are usually contented. Thus you get what is called "a happy ship," and to my mind a happy ship is a well-disciplined one.

To put the same thing in another way. Treat those under you as men and not as cogs in the machine, and they, in their turn, will respect your authority, which is all that is necessary to maintain discipline.

I went to sea when steamers were beginning to oust sailing ships from the carrying trade of the world, but I was fortunate enough to go in time to see some of the more famous of the latter before they finally disappeared.

Calcutta, the port to which I made my first voyage, in those days, was a sight to gladden the eyes of anyone who cared anything about the sea. Tier upon tier of fine sailing ships, three and four deep, stretched along the river from Garden Reach up to the Howrah Bridge, moored bow and stern to buoys especially laid down for their accommodation.

The most favoured moorings were opposite the Esplanade, where the beauty and the wealth of the city used to drive up and down in the cool of the evenings, while some military band would be playing in the Eden Gardens. Sometimes the picturesqueness of the scene was added to by the King of Oude making his appearance, escorted by a bodyguard of Indian soldiers in resplendent uniforms. They always seemed to be travelling at the trot whenever they were seen.

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The men who commanded the sailing ships then were important personages, though the days had passed when they considered it beneath their dignity to go on shore in anything less formal than a square "mainsail" coat and a "gaff topsail" hat, wearing tan gloves and carrying a silk umbrella, no matter how hot the weather might be. A few still kept up the custom when reporting the arrival of their ships, and most of them on shore remained inseparable from their silk umbrellas. They seemed to regard them as their badge of office.

It was considered the correct thing in those days for boys who took up a sea life to remain in sail until they obtained their Master's certificate, and then go into steam. The leading steamship companies would not engage an officer unless he was the possessor of one, and on joining one of their services, one had to start at the bottom of the ladder again as Fourth Officer. Sailing ships therefore were looked upon by most of us as merely a means to an end. Nobody wished to remain in them any longer than he could help.

The idea is still prevalent that a man cannot be fully qualified as a seaman unless he has served a certain portion of his life in sailing ships, but personally I cannot understand why an officer trained in a steamer should not be quite as capable of taking command of a steamer as one who has had sailing ship experience. As a matter of fact, judging from those I have had under me, they are, and I have no fear for the well-being of the Merchant Service now that sailing ships are things of the past. We had more hardships to put up with than they have, but unless it is on the principle of the survival of the fittest, I cannot see that being half starved in a sailing ship in one's young days makes one any the better qualified to take charge on a steamer's bridge.

In my young days the North Atlantic trade was considered, from the weather point of view, the roughest and

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hardest that one could go in for, and generally speaking the officers who sailed in it were elderly men.

I remember that in one of the leading companies engaged in that trade out of Liverpool—it was the leading company then without any question—any officer who was under forty when he entered their service was looked upon as a boy, and was treated as such. They had a rule, too, that no one could rise to command one of their steamers unless he had had previous experience in command of others.

All that is altered now, and the White Star Line was the first to encourage the younger members of the profession to go in for that trade, though when I joined its service in 1889 there were many of the older men still serving as officers; good men they were, too, none better.

Compared with life in the present day ships, the lot of an officer then was a pretty hard one, during the winter months at any rate. The ships were comparatively small and of low freeboard, and it was a common thing to put on one's oilskins and sea boots when leaving the Irish coast, and not venture on deck again without their protection till we got well over to the other side of the Atlantic. Our quarters, which were situated on the fore-deck of the ship, were constantly flooded by the seas that came on board, and often we took our lives in our hands in getting to and from the bridge. On dark nights we would stand in the entrance to the quarters till we felt the ship steady herself for a minute or so, and then make a dash through the water that was rushing about the deck for the ladder leading to the bridge.

Then it was a common occurrence for the steering gear to break down, and I have recollections of lying flat on my stomach on many occasions in the after wheelhouse getting the chains that led round the quadrant connected again, the deck covered with the black oil that seemed to be inseparable from steering engines. Many were the

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curses heard when the vessel shipped a sea that filled the wheelhouse, and we had to let go the chains to come up to breathe before tackling the job again. However, we all pulled together and forgot our troubles and enjoyed life when the weather fined down again or we reached port.

Life on board was not altogether a bed of roses for the passengers we carried in those days, either. It used to be said then that before they embarked, their friends would gather together to pray that they might reach the other side safely, and again to return thanks when they heard they had arrived. The passengers themselves would be so glad to land that they never grumbled about the discomforts they had suffered on the way over. On the contrary, they seemed to take a pride in relating the "awful experiences" they had come through.

I do not remember that many complaints were sent in to the office, as is the case now when any little thing happens on the ship to disturb a passenger's equilibrium. They would often have to remain in their quarters for days on end during bad weather—first class as well as steerage passengers.

When outward bound from Queenstown, I often looked for signs of the conduct amongst the steerage passengers we had embarked there that had inspired the poet Moore to write "The Irish Emigrant's Lament." I must say that I never saw anything resembling his description.

They all seemed to be glad to leave their native land, and we would hardly get outside the harbour before fiddles and concertinas would be produced, and they would be dancing away on the fore-deck with every sign of enjoyment. Never a look at the land they were so loath to leave—according to the poet.

If there happened to be any sea on after passing the Fastnet they would disappear, and no amount of persuasion would get them out of their bunks when the sea calmed down till "stink-pots," otherwise pans of sulphur, were

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lighted in their quarters. Then they would discover that they had more life left in them than they thought they had, and would come rushing on deck gasping for breath.

Hoses would then be turned on and their quarters thoroughly cleaned and dried before they would be allowed to go into them again.

The ventilation was not so good then as it is now, and chloride of lime seemed to be considered the best substitute for fresh air. Anyway, it was scattered freely about. We used to get whiffs of it on the bridge during bad weather when the steward, at intervals of an hour during the night, opened the door to make the best of his way to the bridge to report, "All well in No. 4 (or 5) Steerage, sir."

Nos. 4 and 5 were situated at the after end of the ship, so the smell down below must have been pretty powerful for it to find its way to the bridge upon the opening of a door.

They brought their own straw beds ("Donkeys' breakfasts," they were called) and tin plates and pannikins, but now everything is provided for them, and they fare more sumptuously, so far as food is concerned, than first class passengers used to.

There were often tearful farewells as the gangway went down then, as if the passengers and their friends who were seeing them off never expected to see each other again in this life, and had doubts about meeting each other in a future one.

An instance of this occurs to me when a tactful Second Officer, who was in charge of the gangway on our sailing day from New York, relieved the tension, temporarily, at any rate.

Two youngish ladies, good-looking of course, could hardly tear themselves away from each other. She who was being left behind kept rushing up the gangway for another kiss till the moment came for it to be lowered on to the pier. The Second Officer had to intervene.

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"You cannot have any more," he said, "the ship is sailing."

They pleaded for just one more, but he was adamant. Then a way out occurred to him.

"You can't have any more," he told the young lady on board the ship, "but if you give me one I'll pass it on to her."

They both laughed, and before they had recovered from the slight confusion the gangway was landed.

To-day, on sailing, it is little more than a casual wave of the hand, much as if one left a friend at the corner of a street. "Hope you have a pleasant trip," or, "I'll meet you in Paris in a month," is about all that is said at parting as the passenger turns to the comfort, luxury and safety of a modern liner.

CHAPTER III

THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH

I WAS born at Birkenhead, Cheshire, on the 25th of April, 1864, and have very faint recollections of my early days in the "City of the Future," but I am informed by my sisters that I had the distinction of getting whooping-cough when I was two weeks old, and also that the cure recommended for it by my old nurse was to hold me up by the heels and give me a good shake—which would probably have ended my career then and there. My mother evidently knew more than she did, having had more experience—I was her tenth child—so I was spared that indignity.

When I was four years old, the family left Birkenhead and went to Goole, in Yorkshire, my father having been appointed secretary and general manager to the Goole Steamship Company. On two occasions I narrowly escaped death there: my brother once yanked me with his stick from in front of an approaching train when I had fallen in front of it at a level crossing; and later I was rescued from drowning when I fell into the dock while playing with some other boys on a lighter alongside one of the steamers.

In my young days it wasn't considered necessary to keep boys loafing at school till they reached 17 or 18 years of age, and my education was supposed to be finished at the early age of 14. I have found out since that it was only commencing, but at that age I joined the staff of the Goole Steamship Company as junior clerk, unpaid so far as I remember, and eventually rose to the position of assistant correspondence clerk at a very moderate salary.

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In 1880 my father severed his connexion with the company, and I with him, so it became necessary to choose a career. I had had enough of pushing a pen, and looked round amongst those I knew to try to find out who had the easiest job and the best time in life before deciding. Finally I came to the conclusion that my eldest brother had. He had then just got command of one of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's steamers, and I decided to try to follow in his footsteps.

My father had always spoken to us of the joys of a sea life, as he considered that it was the best training a boy could get, even if he didn't stay long at it. It taught the value of discipline and gave one self-reliance. But I haven't found it quite as he described it in those days—"nothing to do but sit and watch the ship go along and to bring home monkeys and parrots to your friends."

In his earlier days he had been connected with the firm of Henry Fernie & Sons, sailing ship owners, so after I had made up my mind to go to sea he took me to see Mr. Henry Fernie, the founder of the line, and he very kindly promised to make a man of me. I can see him now when he made the promise standing by his desk, with his ruddy face and kindly smile and white whiskers and his barn-door pants—one of the old school.

My indentures were signed on July 5, 1880, and I joined the new full-rigged ship *Laomene* that was being fitted out at Potter's Yard, Queen's Dock, Liverpool. She was almost completed and her cargo was being loaded at the time.

As soon as I had signed my indentures, my brother Jim suddenly made up his mind he would go to sea too. He was two years older than I, and, as he sailed in the *British Statesman*, belonging to Messrs. Sandbach, Tinne & Co., for Calcutta before my ship was ready, he collared my outfit, and another had to be prepared for me. He didn't last long at it, poor chap! He fell from aloft in

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the ship *Columba* some three years later, and was killed instantly. People say I have done well at sea, but had he lived I am sure he would have done better, as he was a much smarter boy than I ever knew how to be.

Captain Hughes, who commanded the *Laomene*, was one of the finest type of sailors that I have ever sailed with : kept good discipline and at the same time was always considerate to those sailing under him. I have the most grateful recollections of the many kindnesses I received from him during the whole of my apprenticeship, and I feel that his good example has stood me in good stead during the whole of my career.

After lying at anchor in the Mersey for a couple of days to complete loading our cargo of salt, there not being sufficient water on the dock sill for us to get out of dock fully loaded, we sailed from Liverpool on my first voyage to sea on July 13, 1880, bound for Calcutta.

It was the custom in those days for most of the sailors to join the ship drunk on sailing day—a custom which has practically died out now, I am happy to say. The first night we were at anchor it came on to blow and rain and the ship commenced to drag. All hands were roused out to give her more chain, and some of the men were very dilatory ; I can remember the Mate haranguing them from the forecastle head.

“Now, men,” he said, “you can either have her a hell afloat or a peaceful home ; choose for yourselves.” He was only a little chap, but he knew how to handle men, and certainly she was much more like a peaceful home than a hell afloat all the time I was in her.

Of the five apprentices only one had ever been to sea before, and he was at first inclined to put on airs till my friend Bayldon had a scrap with him. Bayldon having just left the *Conway*, a training ship for officers stationed in the Mersey, thought he was a bit of a sailor too, so it was natural for him to champion our cause. The fight

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began on deck, but when the Captain noticed what was going on, instead of stopping it as many would have done, he wisely took them both into the cabin and let them fight till they were exhausted. Honours were easy, as far as I remember, and after that we were all good friends.

For the first few days out we had fine weather and everything went happily. But when the ship began to move about later on, sea-sickness set in amongst us, and I verily believe that if I could have got on shore again then the sea would never have seen me again as a sailor. Two or three days, however, and we were fit. We were not allowed to lie up, occupation being considered the best cure for that ailment. I remember we were routed out of our bunks and given brooms and told to scrub the black places where the pitch had run from the seams during the caulking of the decks—a hopeless job, but good healthy exercise which I have recommended to passengers who have travelled with me and were suffering similarly. None of them, however, was willing to try it. When I met my brother later on and we compared notes, he told me he had taken ten days to get over his sickness and had been allowed to stay in his bunk all the time. I was over it in two days, which proved the efficiency of the treatment I received.

Before I went to sea my brother-in-law gave me a large journal in which to keep a diary. After much search I have unearthed it, but cannot say that I am finding it of much use now, as I only wrote in it intermittently and mostly about the weather, then only when it was fine. However, I note in it that on August 20, at 1 A.M., we lost our fore top-gallant mast and that two men who were going up to furl the royal had got into the crosstrees when it went, so they had a very narrow squeak of losing the numbers of their mess. All hands were turned out to shorten sail and clear away the wreck, and I remember us boys being chased along the deck to take our part in

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the operation. We had been discussing the catastrophe, but there's nothing like keeping boys moving to prevent them thinking. A couple of days later when the carpenter had finished shaping the new mast all hands were kept busy again sending it up, and we very soon forgot the incident.

During the fine weather we got lots of fun catching sharks—our Captain being very keen on this kind of amusement. I remember that some of the old sailors used to consider that the oil from the livers of these pests of the sea was a certain cure for rheumatism. I remember better still the stink of those same livers while they were being rendered down in the hot sun with a tin can hanging under them to catch the drops.

Later, when we were running our Easting down, we had good sport catching albatrosses, Cape hens, molly-hawks and such-like birds. The method employed was to tow a piece of bright tin with a tongue cut in it at the end of a line—the birds would make a grab at it, and the art was to give the line a jerk and get them caught by their beaks and then haul them in. Strange to say they were all sea-sick when they landed on the deck. Many of them had pieces of tin or rag on their legs labelled with the date they had been caught before by some other ship, which goes to show they were very foolish birds.

Conditions at sea in sailing ships in those days were pretty hard for boys who had been brought up in comfortable homes, but we soon got used to them. We felt most the shortage of water—three quarts a day for all purposes wasn't very much, so I am afraid that personal cleanliness was somewhat neglected. When we got in the doldrums, however, a degree or two each side of the Equator, full advantage was taken of the copious rain squalls that we got. We used to go about practically naked catching all the rain water we could, filling the

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boats, as much as were allowed, and every available receptacle we could find.

Advantage was taken, too, of this time to wash our clothes. One day I was going forward to wash mine when I was accosted by a kind-hearted (as I thought) sailor, saying, "I'll wash them for you, Hayes; just put them on the hatch with a bucket of water and a bar of soap and come back in an hour to hang them up." I went back about the time he said and found them still on the hatch, the water and my bar of soap gone and his clothes hanging out to dry. Needless to say, I wasn't caught that way again.

Our menu wasn't extensive, either. The biscuits, commonly called "Liverpool pantiles," were so hard you could break them only with a hammer or on the corner of a chest, and they became full of weevils after a short time at sea. The salt beef and pork I could never eat and envied those who could. The beef was called "salt horse," and rumour said that in some ships it was so hard that the sailors used to cut models of ships out of it. We got a small loaf of soft bread twice a week, unless the cook decided to make dough-boys out of the flour and put them in the soup together with tinned Australian meat—beastly stringy stuff in those days—a mixture that was called "sea pie." A merciful Board of Trade had decreed before I went to sea that marmalade and so-called butter should form part of a sailor's diet, and that helped me out, as it made the pantiles more or less palatable—I used to trade my whack of beef and pork for somebody else's butter or marmalade. Still we all waxed fat on it, and I don't think we ever complained.

I hear that nowadays, or perhaps I should say before the war, some of the boys in the ships in which they were being trained for officers in the Merchant Service used to write home to their mothers to complain that their mutton chops, and such delicacies, were not properly cooked.

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Their mothers wrote indignant letters to the office about the treatment their sons were getting, and the office passed them on to the ships' people with a request for an explanation, and there would be a general row all round.

I wonder what would have happened if Henry Fernie & Sons had received any complaints of a similar nature. They would have been shoved in the waste-paper basket, I should say. You got what the Board of Trade allowed in those days, and you got no more unless you happened to sail under a kind-hearted Captain, as we did. When we were in port abroad we were permitted to get what we liked from the man who supplied the ship, up to the amount allowed, and we supplemented it out of our pocket-money—while it lasted!

We apprentices were all duly made Sons of Neptune when we first crossed the Line—a rough-and-tumble business it was, and I bear to this day the mark of my initiation on my forehead, but, happily, a kindly wrinkle that time has brought with it hides the scar more or less. One of Neptune's myrmidons caught me with the rim of a bucket when he was throwing water over me.

I had one narrow squeak when we were running our Easting down, and if I didn't get much sympathy over it, I got some good, sound, practical advice from the old Second Mate. He was one of the old school who held a certificate of service, as I think it was called, which meant that he was sailing as an officer before examinations were inaugurated by the Board of Trade. We were shortening sail one afternoon and at the time were taking in the mizen upper topsail. I was in near the mast, working away next to the Bosun, when the sail flapped up and knocked me off the yard. I managed to grab the cross-jack lift as I was going down, and so saved myself, and when I got back on the yard again the Bosun said, "Did you fall?" and after I had answered, "Yes," he said, "You silly ass," and that was all the sympathy I got

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from him! Later on, when the sail was furled and I had reached the poop, the Second Mate called me to him and asked the same question, and when I had given him the same answer—with a certain amount of trepidation this time—he said, “You damned fool,” then patted me on the shoulder and followed it up by saying, “Always remember, my boy, when you are aloft that there’s one hand for yourself and another for the ship,” and added as he turned away, “the best for yourself.”

On October 30, 109 days out from Liverpool, the Calcutta pilot boarded us.

The Calcutta Pilotage Service is in a class by itself, and certainly the gentleman who boarded us kept up its traditions. He came alongside with a retinue of servants, bed and cooking utensils and his own leadsman, and was too dignified to climb up the Jacob’s ladder we had provided for him, but waited in his boat till we had rigged the gangway ladder.

We were unbending the sails while towing up the river, and were suddenly all called down for no apparent reason to us. “All hands down from aloft,” was the cry, and down we came. We were then told to stand by and to be ready to swim for it as we were approaching the St. James and Mary Shoal, a very dangerous quicksand. The carpenter was stationed on the forecastle head ready to cut the hawser if the tug touched, and others were stationed ready to let go the anchor. We were also told that if we touched the ship would capsize and soon disappear in the quicksands. Possibly the dangers were exaggerated for the benefit of us first voyagers; however, neither of us did touch and we eventually anchored at Garden Reach.

When the Captain came back from making his report or whatever it was he had gone on shore for, he sent for me and told me that the *British Statesman* was sailing next day, and that I might go on shore and spend the

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night with my brother, which was very considerate of him. He gave me some money to pay my expenses—a rupee, I think it was—and told me not to give the dinghy men more than two annas for taking me on shore. They stopped rowing when we were about half-way and asked for the money, or made signs that they wouldn't go any farther till they got it. I gave them the two annas, and then they looked very fierce and demanded more, and eventually got nearly all the rupee out of me. I was in a bit of a quandary when I landed as to how to get to the *British Statesman*, and a crowd collected round me all jabbering at once. Judge of my relief when an apprentice from another ship pushed his way through the crowd to find out what the trouble was. I told him my tale, and he said he was going up to Calcutta himself, hailed a gharry and drove me up to the Esplanade opposite which was my brother's ship.

When I got on board I found they were not nearly ready for sea; as a matter of fact, we spent our Christmas Day together, and another one in the same place two years later, which was the last I saw of him. I stayed the night with him and his fellow-apprentices, and returned to my own ship next day. In due course we went up the river, moored in a tier or two away from him, and many a good time we had together.

As I have mentioned earlier, Calcutta was a sight in those days, with tier upon tier of fine sailing ships, moored three and four abreast, stretching from Howrah Bridge down to Garden Reach. The officers all vied with each other as to who could keep the cleanest and trimmest ship, and you may be sure we apprentices criticized their efforts and bragged amongst ourselves about our own ships. The British people on shore had a soft spot for sailors, because during the Mutiny the men had landed from the ships that were then there and had made themselves efficient for the protection of the city. Their efforts at kindliness,

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however, chiefly ran in the direction of trying to convert us apprentices to some form or other of religion. There must have been anything from six to seven hundred apprentices in port during the winter months, and the ladies of the place used to organize tea-fights, followed, or preceded by, prayer-meetings and sometimes sing-songs. The latter were the most popular, I must say, and when the tea-fight preceded the meeting the gathering would not be so numerous towards the finish.

I remember on one occasion two of us who happened to be strolling about were invited into a house. Inside there were one parson and several ladies, but no sign of tea and cakes. We were all invited to kneel, and the reverend gentleman held forth in prayer, and during his prayer he said something to the following effect: "Thank God we know there are two sinners amongst us," and so on and so on, but when he came out of his trance he would find that the sinners had fled, as we had quietly crawled out.

On another occasion a free fight took place at the Seaman's Bethel, an old ship that had been converted into a sort of a church by a clergyman familiarly known as "Holy Joe." The occasion was a concert, and when the tea was being handed round some evilly disposed persons sitting in the front rows, after they had had their teas, upset the trays as they were being taken to those farther away. This naturally incensed the latter, and a free fight commenced which "Holy Joe" and others on the platform couldn't control by words. He therefore appealed to the well-disposed amongst us to fire the others out, which we eventually did, and then had as much tea and cakes as we could safely stow away as a reward.

There was another place at Kidderpore, and religious captains—there were some—used to patronize that. I never heard what they said when on one occasion they came out and found their gharries weren't waiting for

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them. Nine or ten of us boys would climb into one, and a horsy member would take charge of the horse and drive us in style up to the Esplanade. Then we would let the driver take the gharry away. One night the bottom dropped out of one and we had the deuce of a job to make the driver stop—he thought we were singing chanties as usual instead of shouting at him. The horse couldn't go very fast with the load he had to drag, so nobody was hurt.

There were some American missionaries who ran a coffee-room in Flag Street in the heart of Sailor Town for the benefit of sailors, at which we were always welcome. They used to encourage their converts to relate their experiences, and it was amusing sometimes to listen to an enthusiastic sailor, usually a Dutchman—as all Swedish and Norwegian sailors were then called, to distinguish them from the Mediterranean sailors who were always called Dagoes—relating their awful misdeeds and thanking God they were saved. Their efforts usually were received with much applause, as they went into minute details and their sins were chiefly connected with wine and women.

Prayer-meetings and sing-songs were not our only amusements—we used to go to the Eden Gardens on the Esplanade in the evenings, where all the fashion of Calcutta drove round in their carriages while the band was playing, and when that ceased we used to stroll about in gangs seeking amusement wherever we could find it, and the wonder to me is that we were not “run in” many times for the things we did. But the white police were always lenient with us, and we didn't mind the “Chokidars,” as the native police were called.

One night during Hopsen Jopsen time (I'm sure I've spelled that wrong) we took part in a religious procession, and why we were not killed and eaten I don't know. We got fairly friendly with the priests and tried to persuade them

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to give us some of the ornaments from the sort of altars they were carrying—at least some of us did, while others were making vain attempts to pinch some of them. The white police were everywhere that night, and I think some soldiers, so probably our immunity from death was due to their protection.

Another of our favourite amusements on a Saturday night—the night the majority of the seamen got two rupees each to spend—was to go to Flag Street close to the American Coffee Rooms and watch the fights that took place between the drunken sailors. Some of them were classic, and I remember one night in particular when a little Geordie fireman knocked out about eight big “Dutchmen” before the police ran him in. The uniform of the police, at least those in that neighbourhood where the police station was situated, consisted of a pair of pants and a singlet on those nights, and when a fight was well under way they would issue forth and surround the participants and their supporters and run them in and bang-to the gates. I think they must have had a soft spot for the Geordie fireman, as they gave him such a good innings. On the Monday morning following the police boat used to come round the ships to deliver the Saturday night’s catch at two rupees a head.

There was a circus on the Maidan for part of the time, with a boxing tent as part of the show, and one night Lord William Beresford was there, and was so taken with the prowess of a Captain of one of the ships that he offered to take him on himself. A match was arranged, not at the circus, and we afterwards heard that Lord William had been knocked out—a result that, for some reason or other, pleased us all very much.

Our stock of money was soon gone, and then the problem arose as to how we were to get on shore without paying. Sometimes we were able to persuade the Captain’s dinghy wallah to take us, and at others we couldn’t.

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One night we all crowded into a salt lighter's boat, a very frail affair. We managed to get it into shallow water, however, before it sank under us, and we were able to walk on shore. Getting back never troubled us, as we could always walk along the beach till we found a dinghy with the men asleep in it, and it didn't require much effort to pick up the stone it was moored to, or cut the rope, jump on board, give the dinghy a good shove, and we were afloat, with one of us at the steering oar. When we arrived alongside the ship, another shove would set the dinghy adrift again. On these occasions I always remembered the man who got nearly all my rupee when he took me on shore the day we arrived at Garden Reach.

Happy, irresponsible days they were, and we were all sorry in a way when January 8, 1881, came, and we broke our moorings and dropped down the river again, bound for Liverpool, where we arrived looking spick and span on June 8. I received a very warm welcome from my family.

After dinner my father asked me if I had learned to smoke, and I told him I had. He then presented me with a strong cigar which I smoked to the bitter end without a qualm, much to his surprise.

My second voyage was to Melbourne with a general cargo and a certain number of emigrants, and I don't think anything exceptional happened on that trip. A new apprentice joined called Bernard, and during the first few days he ate so many of the "Liverpool pantiles" that we told him he would have to restrain his appetite, as when we were three weeks at sea we would be put on the strict Board of Trade allowance—one pound per day, which meant about four and a half. With that he emptied the clothes out of his sea-chest and put them under his bed in his bunk, and every morning before the bread barge was taken to be refilled he emptied what

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remained into his chest. It took a month or so before he realized we were playing a joke on him.

We moored at Sandridge Railway Pier (since called Port Melbourne), and the pier was a sight on Saturday afternoons and Sundays to gladden the hearts of young, impressionable sailors. A jingle of a music-hall song that I have heard somewhere or other commences, "Wise men say there are more women than men in the world," and ends, "Why can't every man have three wives." Well, every apprentice could have had three sweethearts in those days at Sandridge. I don't know whether it was the brass buttons that were the attraction, or what, but the girls used to flock down to the ships in shoals and come on board when invited. Flappers, I think they would be called in these days. Lately I have read a book on American flappers in which it was stated that there was safety in the number of their admirers. The position was reversed at Melbourne, but I think the same safety obtained; at any rate, I never heard of anything very out of the way happening.

From Melbourne we went to Newcastle, N.S.W., to load coals for San Francisco, and a filthy job it was, but we apprentices got out of the worst of it, as we had to take the Captain to the city every morning in the gig and wait for him. Then, sometimes, he would go fishing in the afternoons, but that wasn't a high success, as there were very few fish in the harbour to be caught. The first afternoon we went out he offered a pound of tobacco to the first one to catch a fish. I caught the only one, but I didn't get the tobacco as it was a cat-fish and uneatable!

We had a high old time at 'Frisco visiting the dives—a kind of music-hall show where there was nothing to pay to go in, but if your thirst didn't require frequent quenching you were soon fired out. A modest "schooner" of light beer was about our limit, but we were allowed

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to stay as long as we liked. Then we shifted across the bay to Oakland to load grain, and we had our gig out again to row the Captain to the ferry to 'Frisco, the wharf being about a mile and a half (I should think) long to the deep water where we were lying. We used to get a free ride on the train from the ferry to Oakland City, as the fare was 'Frisco to Oakland, but coming back we had to jump off the train before it got into the Ferry House, otherwise we might have had to pay; and many were the tumbles we had down the bank, much to the alarm of some of the passengers.

I had my first experience of American confidence men here. One evening I was going on shore while we were lying alongside at Oakland, when a man came on board with a black leather bag full of closed envelopes and commenced talking glibly to us all, explaining that it was only a dollar a pick. While he was talking he kept putting his hand into a bag and picking out envelopes containing 5-, 10- and sometimes 20-dollar bills. We became interested, and as I was dressed for shore and he knew I was going I verily believe if I had had a shot I would have secured a prize, just to encourage the others, but I hadn't the courage to risk the solitary dollar I possessed, as I had a very particular appointment to keep. When I got back on board I was told that Bayldon, who was flush at the time, was minus ten dollars and the others one or two each, so the man made something by his enterprise. As a consolation he gave Bayldon a small revolver, which I don't think worked.

My third voyage was to Calcutta again, where I had much the same kind of experiences as on my first voyage, though I noticed a difference—tramp steamers were taking the place of the tiers of fine sailing ships, and the tea-fights were less numerous; but we had a good time all the same. The white policemen were not quite so lenient

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with us either, they interfered more with our pranks, which may have been because we were older.

From Calcutta we went to New York, and arrived there a few days after the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge. I remember being told of the panic that took place on that occasion when several people lost their lives. Some persons started the rumour that the bridge was giving way, and then plied their trade of picking pockets. I don't remember very much about my first visit to New York, excepting that we all paid a kind of an awesome visit to the Bowery, expecting to see I don't know what; anyway, we didn't see anything more than the ordinary doings that went on in sailor-town in any other city.

We went across from Brooklyn, where we had been berthed on arrival, to Weehawken to load case oil for London, and after we were loaded were taken to an anchorage off Staten Island to wait for a crew—all our sailors having deserted, as was usual. We eventually shipped runners for the passage across. A tough lot they were. They wouldn't do any work, excepting take in and trim sails when necessary and wash the decks, unless driven to it. You see, they had had their run money in advance, and the boarding-house people got most of it, I expect. They were a source of trouble to the officers all the way over, but we apprentices were rather amused with them than otherwise, as it was our first experience of that kind of thing.

One night one of them was missing, or rather he was missed in the morning at daylight. The Captain made inquiries, and he found he had last been seen about 1 A.M., so he put the ship about and went back to look for him—a hopeless job, of course, but from later experience I judge that the Captain had in mind the awkward questions that would be put to him by the Board of Trade officials on arrival as to "what means were taken to save the deceased." The lost man was an Irish-

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man, a morose and half-witted kind of an individual, and, as the Fenians were very much in evidence then, rumour had it that he was going to England to do some dastardly deed—blow up the Houses of Parliament, or something. He had shipped as a runner to escape the vigilance of Scotland Yard when he landed, and, funk-ing it, had jumped overboard to end his perplexities.

When we arrived at London I received the news of my brother Jim having fallen from aloft at sea, and I was granted permission by the owners to go to Liverpool right away and to stay there till the ship was ready to sail on her next voyage. Through being at home I missed the most thrilling experience that the *Laomene* or any of the people on board her had ever gone through, but I was told about it when I rejoined her by the other apprentices who were lucky enough to be on board at the time.

She was being towed round from London to Cardiff and experienced very bad weather from the south-west in the Channel. After she had passed the Isle of Wight the hawser carried away, and though every effort was made, they couldn't get another one passed to the tug. Eventually they lost sight of each other, and the tug went into shelter inside the Isle of Wight and reported she didn't know what had become of the ship! The *Laomene* was drifting on to the rocks close to the Needles, and everybody had given up hope, when the tide caught her and took her through the channel into safety and she came to an anchor off Yarmouth. It was so close a call that the Captain and Chief Mate had lashed their wives to gratings and had said good-bye to each other. The surprise of the tug-boat's crew must have been great when daylight came in and they saw the *Laomene* at anchor not very far away. When the weather fined down she was taken in tow again and reached Penarth Docks without further incident.

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I joined her there a few days before she was ready for sea, and we sailed for Port Louis, Mauritius, all covered with coal dust—it was in the sails and everywhere, and we were glad to be at sea again to get her cleaned up.

We apprentices had become mild financiers by then. We made a tarpaulin muster of all the silver we had and changed it into gold before going to sea, bearing in mind that we could get more rupees out East for gold than we could for the equivalent amount in silver—sixteen against ten. And rupees were rupees to us in those days.

We almost had the Island of Mauritius in sight when we experienced a cyclone, and we didn't arrive there for another couple of weeks or so. After we had moored the ship and sent down the upper yards and housed the topmasts—precautions taken by every ship lying there—the lame ducks began to arrive, and we realized more than ever before what a good sailorman Captain Hughes was. We hadn't even carried away the proverbial rope yarn during the severe weather.

My career very nearly came to an end at Mauritius, as the Chief Mate, one other apprentice, a sailor and myself were sent to the hospital there suffering from typhoid fever, and I was the only one of the four to survive. I remember feeling very ill on board, but when the Hindu doctor came off to the ship to pay his usual visit, after overhauling me he merely said: "Give him a dose of salts, he will be all right in the morning." But I wasn't; I was worse, and asked to be sent to the hospital.

The system by which the crews of sailing vessels were looked after medically in foreign ports, where they usually made long stays, was for the Captain to make a contract with some doctor on shore to pay periodical visits to the ship, and he was also sent for in an emergency. The cheapest man amongst the doctors who catered for this kind of business generally got the job, but Captain

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Hughes, after the Mauritius experience, vowed he would have no more cheap doctors.

I was delirious when I got to the hospital, and remained so more or less for the first six weeks out of my nine weeks' stay in it. I have hazy recollections of my shipmates visiting me, especially the Captain and Bayl-don, and of my buying any amount of curios to take home with me, which I was surprised to find weren't there when I came to my proper senses—of course, I had no money to buy them with. I suppose the delusion originated through my asking what was behind the screen they had put round the bed opposite to me, and receiving the answer, "Curios." I afterwards found out it had been put there when my fellow-apprentice, Furbank, was dying.

The doctors in charge of the hospital were Frenchmen; and very kind they were to me, but they hardly knew what we were all suffering from. I was told that such a thing as typhoid had never made its appearance in the island before.

One night, when I was convalescent, I awoke to find a mad French captain lying beside me on my bed and talking to me in a persuasive tone of voice in French. I let one yell out of me, which soon brought assistance, and he was put in a strait-jacket and I never saw him again.

The *Laomene* sailed away for Port Pirrie, South Australia, long before I was well enough to leave the hospital, and I remember how lonely I felt when they all came up to say good-bye to me. I expect they must have been extra solemn in their farewells, as I wasn't by any means "out of the wood" then. When I was, I found another example of Captain Hughes's kindness waiting for me—he had left £100 of the freight behind to pay my hospital expenses and passage home, and had given instructions that I was to be sent "up the hills" to recuperate for a couple of weeks before sailing. I landed in London at the end of April, 1884.

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When I arrived in the bosom of my family at Liverpool I was taken to the family doctor, and he very kindly prescribed three months' holiday with plenty of good food, and then I would be fit to go to sea again.

Fortified with this prescription, I reported myself, well wrapped up, at the office of Messrs. Henry Fernie & Sons, and was greeted by one of the partners with the remark, "You are the most expensive apprentice we have ever had," to whom I ventured to reply, "You are very lucky, sir, considering the number of ships you have." I gathered from their manner that they were not very pleased to see me. After a little discussion their managing clerk asked them was I to go to sea again as an apprentice, and they said, "Certainly." I ventured to remind them that I was still under the doctor's care, and they said, "All right; go away, and come back when he says you are fit to go to sea."

I went back, but it was after my indentures had expired, and everything regarding them being settled up, they were handed to me, and so ended my apprenticeship. As the Fernies seemed to think I was of no further use to them I had to look for employment elsewhere.

Owing to my having been left behind sick at Mauritius I hadn't the necessary "four years at sea" to pass for Second Mate, so looked about for a Third Mate's job, and eventually found one in the *Falls of Afton*, a four-masted full-rigged ship owned by Wright Breckenridge, of Glasgow, and commanded by Captain Seaton. The salary was £2 15s. per month, an able seaman's pay at that time.

I was told when I joined her that on her maiden trip the *Falls of Afton* had been abandoned by her crew because she wouldn't sail fast enough to suit the man who was in charge of her. They were taken off by some ship and landed at Madeira, and were surprised a day or two later to find their own ship lying peacefully at anchor off the island. She had been boarded by a French barque

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shortly after she had been abandoned, who, on investigation, found the only trouble with her was a cut pipe leading up to the Captain's bathroom through which she was gradually filling. They stopped the flow and sailed her to Madeira and claimed salvage—good luck for them but bad for the man who was responsible for her abandonment. He was criminally prosecuted and his certificate cancelled, and, if I remember rightly, he got a certain amount of imprisonment too.

I made a voyage to Rangoon and back to Liverpool in this ship, and had the pleasure of meeting the *Laomene* there with some of my old shipmates still on board.

A strange incident happened while we were lying at anchor in Rangoon River for which I have never been able to account. My job as Third Mate was to take charge of the boat that was sent to bring the coolies off to the ship to work the cargo. There was a buoy half-way between us and the shore at which the British-India steamers used to moor. One morning while I was on shore waiting for the coolies a dense fog came on, and as there was a strong ebb tide running I hesitated whether to wait for the weather to clear, but finally decided to risk it. We made the buoy all right and shaped a course from there to the ship. After about ten minutes' hard pulling we passed the same buoy again, how or why I don't know; however, after passing it the second time we managed to pick up the sound of the ship's bell, which was being rung in a certain way to guide us to our own ship, and got alongside all right.

When we arrived in the Mersey homeward bound we anchored near New Brighton to wait for high water to go into dock, and I think all my relations and friends took trips on the New Brighton ferry boat to welcome me home again, much to my surprise, as I didn't even know that they were aware the ship was in the river. We docked at ten that night, or I should say we passed through the outer

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gates at that time, but it was nearly 3 A.M. before we finally hauled her into her berth, and even then the Mate made everybody stay on board to wash her down. "They have to be paid for the day, so why shouldn't they work for part of it, anyway?" was his idea, I suppose.

My father and brother had chartered a cab from home to take me there in triumph, and a weary wait they had—my brother came on board when we were alongside to find out how long I was likely to be, and I filled his top hat with Burmah cheroots. When he got back to the Customs hut, where my father was waiting, he was on the point of taking his hat off when he felt something moving and refrained—a lucky escape. When we finally got home, about five in the morning, we found my mother and sisters all sitting up and a good meal waiting.

After a few days' holiday I went to a Nautical School kept by old "Jimmy" Cogle and a Captain Taylor to rub up my navigation and then passed for Second Mate, and very proud I was when I sailed away for Wellington, New Zealand, as second of the barque *Loch Bredan* on September 25, 1885. From Wellington we went to Dunedin to load for London.

I first met Commodore Sir James Charles of the Cunard Company, who now commands the *Aquitania*, at Dunedin. He was then Second Mate of the *Margaret Galbraith*, lying in the berth ahead of us at the wharf. We used to go on shore together in the evenings, and he reminded me of it some years later when we met on drill. He had altered more in appearance than I had.

Only ten months' sea service that voyage, so I had to make another before I could pass for Mate. Captain Cumming, of the *Loch Bredan*, offered to keep my berth open for me, but I was in too big a hurry to get all my certificates and get "into steam" to wait for her. I joined the *Loch Cree*, another barque owned by the same company, and made a voyage in her "to Sydney and New-

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castle, N.S.W., to the W.C. of South America and back to Goole," as I see by the reference her Captain kindly gave me for "being sober and strictly attentive to my duties." Goole, where I had spent most of my boyhood's days, received me with open arms, but I didn't stay long before going to Liverpool to put myself under "Jimmy" Cogle's care again to pass for Mate, which I succeeded in doing without undue effort on November 3, 1887.

CHAPTER IV

MY LAST VOYAGE IN SAIL

I MADE a search for a Mate's berth round Liverpool, but in vain, and then, hearing that the *Falls of Dee* was in Hull with one of my old commanders in charge of her, I wrote to him. He replied that he had a vacancy for Second Mate and I could have it if I liked.

As twelve months' more service at sea, either as First or Second Mate, would enable me to go up for my Master's certificate, and bearing in mind my brother's advice when I first went to sea: "Get your Master's certificate as quickly as you can in sailing ships, and then join some good line of steamers and stay there," I decided to accept this offer. I joined her in Hull on December 20.

She was loading railway iron for San Francisco, and as labour was comparatively short at the port the stevedores were working thirty-six hours on end, then taking a spell of twelve hours, and turning to for another spell of thirty-six. Which probably accounted for the trouble that beset us after we had been a few days at sea.

I had a dog at home at that time, and before leaving Hull I asked the Captain's permission to take it with me for the voyage. He was undecided, so I asked the Mate, who knew him better than I did, what I should do. "Bring it," he said, "he won't mind once we get to sea." Thus Topsy's adventurous career at sea commenced. She had been given to me as a pup by a lady in Liverpool, and when her gardener handed her over to my sister to bring to me he said: "She's a good dog, miss—a cross between a terrier and a pug." And so she was—a good dog, I

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mean. After we had been a little while at sea and Topsy had caught her first rat, it was "Good dog, Topsy," from the Captain, instead of "We will be getting hydrophobia in the ship one of these days," as it had been up to then.

When we were ready for sea, the old Trinity House pilot who had been engaged to take us down the North Sea came on board, and I remember the Captain, a cautious old Scotsman, saying to him several times: "You take all responsibility, don't you, Pilot?" and the old pilot answering, with all the assurance possible: "That's all right, Captain; you can go to bed whenever you like and leave her to me."

The local pilot boarded us that evening, and on being towed out of the dock entrance we grazed across the bows of some steamer that was lying alongside the dock wall waiting to go in when we were clear. That caused a certain amount of excitement on board and carried away our main braces, so we anchored in Grimsby Roads for the night, and after repairing damages we put to sea next day.

How we ever got down the North Sea without accident beats me—light variable airs and dense fog all the way—but the old pilot was cheery through it all; optimistic, too, for whenever he heard the yards being trimmed to take advantage of any air there was, he would come up on the poop and say: "There's no need to bother with the yards, Mister, the wind will come from the north-east," and sure enough it did.

By the time we were abreast of Dover, where we landed him, there was a moderate north-east wind blowing with fine clear weather, which lasted till we were well clear of the Channel.

Then our troubles commenced. Bad weather set in, a heavy gale from the south-west. We had to reduce sail. While we were taking in the foresail the ship gave a heavy lurch, the railway iron shifted, and she went over nearly

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on to her beam ends and remained there with the seas washing pretty well all over her. Luckily nobody was washed overboard or hurt.

This happened at about ten o'clock on a dark, dirty night, and nothing could be done then.

We expected that if the wind shifted to the north-west and blew harder, as is usual in south-west gales when they get tired of blowing from the south-west, she would heel over the other way and the cargo would go through her side and that would be the end of her.

A lot of us were gathered together hanging on as best we could under the dodger in the jigger rigging wondering what was going to happen, when the old sailmaker said: "Here goes for a — good smoke before I go to hell." With that he got hold of a rope that was fast to the pin rail in the rigging and lowered himself down to the deck, crawled along to the deck-house, and by-and-by struggled back with his pipe filled and well under way.

The Bosun, who was really a bigger blackguard than the sailmaker—he certainly had used fouler language up till a few hours previously—reproved him for swearing at such a time, and "Sails" answered: "I've been swearing ever since I could talk, and I don't suppose it will make any difference where I go to if I knock off for the next half-hour." Which effectually squelched the Bosun.

Old "Sails" was quite a character and had been a very hard case in his youth, but increasing age had mellowed him. He took a delight in relating the wild exploits of his early days at sea, and was particularly proud of having been a bucko Third Mate in one of the American packet ships in their worst days—which meant that he had been specially shipped to lick the sailors into shape and to haze them out without any pay at the ports they touched at.

In one of his yarns of the American packet ships—before he was selected for Third Mate—he told me the sailors took charge of the ship and wouldn't do anything

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beyond keep a look-out, steer, trim the yards and take in and make sail when *they* considered it necessary. He concluded: "There was grass on her decks six inches long when we arrived at Calcutta, and I've been sorry ever since that I didn't put her ashore at Diamond Harbour when we were towing up the river, and I was at the wheel—then we could have escaped into the woods. As it was, as soon as we anchored at Garden Reach the police came off and took us ashore. We all got six months apiece."

He said he had been in every navy that took white men, and added: "They kicked me out of the British Navy because they couldn't tame me; and if they can't tame you there they can't tame you anywhere."

After "Sails" had got back to the poop with his pipe I thought I would take a chance and go to my room under the break of the poop to see how Topsy was getting on. She was quite lively and very pleased to see me, and I remember thinking what a beastly shame it was to bring a nice dog to sea to be drowned. However, she wasn't drowned, and, as a matter of fact, lived to have even a narrower escape than that from a watery grave.

The wind didn't shift to the north-west and blow harder. It died down where it was during the night and the sea went down with it, so that at daylight, or shortly after, we were able to open a hatch and go down below to find out what really had happened.

At Hull some casks of bleaching powder (chloride of lime) had been stowed on top of the railway iron forward. These had got adrift and had knocked down the toms securing the railway iron as far as the after end of the main hatch, and the mass forward of that had shifted violently over to starboard. It must have gone with terrific force, as eight thicknesses of it had bent round the mainmast and all the hatch ladders and stanchions from there forward had carried away.

All hands were turned to, and after about thirty-six

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hours of good hard work we got the cargo straightened up and secured and the ship upright again. A rotten job it was working with the stink of chloride of lime all about us, and when we had been at it for about twelve hours somebody suggested that it might be a good idea to broach the "Medical Comforts" to buck us all up a bit.

The Board of Trade regulations require all ships to carry a certain amount of spirits and port wine amongst the medical stores to be used in case of sickness.

When the demand for them became a little more insistent it was discovered that there weren't any. The "Old Man" and the pilots had consumed the lot between undocking at Hull and arriving off Dover. Hence the Trinity House pilot's optimism, to which I have already referred.

We were not very far from Cape Finisterre by the time we got her upright again. We could see the coast of Spain in the distance.

A sort of murmuring was going on amongst the sailors about putting back to Plymouth to have the cargo re-stowed, but we had a fair wind, and it seemed a pity to waste it, so it was decided to continue on our voyage, and if the cargo showed any signs of shifting again we could put in to Madeira.

No further trouble arose by the time we got abreast of the island and we were in the north-east trade winds, so optimism prevailed, and on we went with a kind of vague idea simmering through the ship that we would either put into Monte Video or the Falkland Islands and have the cargo re-stowed before we faced the bad weather off Cape Horn.

One of the apprentices had more or less gone out of his mind by this time, though it was not attributable to anything that had happened in the *Falls of Dee*. He had had a sunstroke in New Zealand while serving his time in some other ship, and had been sent home from there and his indentures were cancelled. His parents evidently

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couldn't do anything with him, so to get rid of him bound him again to the owners of our ship. Poor chap, he got worse as time went on and had to be kept under strict supervision. The Captain thought that my room would be a good place to keep him in, while I thought that a spare room in the cabin would be better, as the steward would then be next door to him—a difference of opinion that led to a certain amount of argument, and I was getting the worst of it when I suddenly remembered a method I had hit on when I previously sailed with this Captain to get him into a good humour.

He had a very fine head of snow-white hair of which he was very proud, while my hair had mostly left me after my attack of typhoid fever at the Mauritius. Whenever he had been inclined to go for me on the previous voyage, I found that by gently bringing the conversation round to the subject of hair-washes he would soon forget my misdeeds.

I managed to do the same thing on this occasion, and after we had discussed the respective merits of various remedies, he wound up the discussion by saying: "All right, Mister, you can have your own way this time, but bear in mind that you won't always get it"; "Tommy," as he was called by everybody, was put next to the steward.

We sailed along with everything going smoothly on board, crossed the Equator in due course, picked up the south-east trades, and were beginning to forget all about the kind of cargo we had on board. But we were rudely reminded of it when we were off the River Plate, somewhere in the latitude of Monte Video.

A *pampero*, a local wind that comes down the mountains, butt-end first, and stretches far out to sea before it loses its force, struck us, and the ship commenced rolling heavily again.

The carpenter, when he came up from making his

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rounds to see that the toms were standing all right, and were doing their duty in keeping the railway iron quiet, reported that the whole mass of it in the lower hold was moving from side to side as the ship rolled. A nice kettle of fish and one that required immediate action, otherwise goodness knows what might have happened.

All hands were roused out and we collected what ropes we could, wooden fenders and everything we could think of—the studding sail booms were cut up, I remember—and went down below. A nice job it was, dodging about on top of the moving iron and dropping chunks of wood and bundles of old rope into any hole that we could find as the ship rolled.

We had seventy-five barrels of chain—or perhaps it was a hundred and fifty, I don't quite remember—amongst our cargo which came in very handy on this occasion. We broke them open and paid the chain out amongst the iron and eventually got everything secure again.

The question of putting into the Falkland Islands came up again for discussion. Sailors are proverbially of an optimistic nature, and perhaps the knowledge that we would have to discharge and re-stow the cargo ourselves had something to do with the decision; anyway, it was decided to carry on, and as events turned out we had no further trouble.

After this we had a strong fair wind for several days and were booming along at about twelve knots—in daytime I should say. The first evening we got the wind it was my first watch on deck, 8 P.M. to midnight, and I remember about 8.30 P.M. the Captain coming up and after a few minutes talk remarking: "I don't think the jigger and fore royals are doing much good, Mister, you may as well take them in." I called the watch along and did as he told me. I had hardly got back to the poop when up he came again and remarked: "You see, she isn't going any slower, Mister." Then in a minute or two:

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"I don't think the main and mizen royals are doing much good either, Mister, and, if it did come on to blow, they would only be in the way, so take them in." I did, and had just reached the poop when up he came again and commented on the slight difference they made. Then in a little while: "I don't think the jigger and fore upper topgallant-sails are doing much good, Mister." I didn't wait for him to say "Take them in," but shouted out: "Clew the jigger t'gallant-sail up." The men came, and after some of them had gone aloft to furl it, I said to the rest: "Lower the fore upper t'gallant-sail," and was following them forward to superintend the operation when the old man shouted: "There's no use in taking two bites at a cherry, Mister; take the lower one in too while you are at it."

The same kind of thing went on till we had all the t'gallant-sails and the jigger made fast, and then he said: "How fast she's going, now, Mister?" I looked over the side and said: "I don't know, sir; I suppose about seven." "Ah, well," he would reply, "I've seen the time we would be glad to be going five." With that he went down to bed and slept the sleep of the easy-minded, I hope. This happened many times, so I became accustomed to his vagaries, and, as a matter of fact, I wasn't specially grieved about it, as I always had in the back of my mind the twelve months' sea service I had to put in before I could go up for my Master's certificate, and I didn't want another voyage in sail if I could help it.

To account for all the "Misters" that appear in these records of conversations, I may as well explain that they weren't peculiar to the Captain I was then sailing under. During my time in sail the custom was for the Mate to be called by his name with the prefix, but the Second Mates were just plain "Misters."

We made three attempts to sail through the Straits of Le Maire before we succeeded, owing to the wind dying

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away and then springing up again from the opposite direction.

For a wonder we had a fair wind rounding Cape Horn—a fresh easterly wind was blowing, and we were proceeding under our usual easy sail at night when a ship called the *Traveller* very nearly ran in to us. She was coming up dead astern and, though our stern light was burning brightly, she got within hailing distance before she sheered off and passed along our port side. I am afraid our hail wasn't a very polite one, as it consisted of: "Ship ahoy! where the hell are you coming to? Are you all blind?"

During the fine weather in the Atlantic and the Pacific Topsy got very friendly with the old sailmaker and used to be allowed to lie on the sails he was repairing, but if a sailor ventured to put his foot on them when passing along the decks it was "Go for him, Topsy!" from old "Sails," and Topsy would have him by the leg of his pants in less than no time.

Nothing else of interest occurred that I remember till we arrived at San Francisco, passing through the Golden Gates on June 2, 1888, our 157th day out from Hull. A fairly long passage and a good part of my twelve months gone.

We anchored in the bay in the early evening, and the boarding-house runners flocked on board armed with flasks of stuff they called whisky, and glib tongues, and assisted the sailors to furl the sails.

By the time this was finished they had used their tongues to such good effect, promising good jobs on shore and such-like fairy tales, that most of the men packed their bags and deserted the ship as soon as they reached the deck. Apparently no means existed of preventing them, as in every other ship the same thing happened.

While we were at anchor, waiting for a berth to discharge our cargo, the Captain brought off a big policeman

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to take poor Tommy on shore with a view to his being placed somewhere where he could be looked after, and I was sent on shore with him.

I was given no orders regarding the disposal of Tommy, and in my innocence thought my part would end when I landed him at the wharf, so didn't take any money with me.

The policeman wanted to put him in handcuffs before leaving the ship, but I told him it wasn't necessary. All he needed was a little humouring, and he would do as he was told. On the way ashore Tommy kept saying: "If I give you the *Falls of Dee*, what will you give me?" and I gave him some reply that kept him quiet, but I could see that the policeman was nervous till we got him on shore.

Then owing to the absence of money we had to walk the poor boy through the streets to the Tombs, as apparently it was necessary to take him before a police magistrate before he could be dealt with.

On the way he became a little refractory and people began to stare and a crowd to gather, but, when I said: "Now, then, Tommy, walk like a soldier," he would square his shoulders and walk along for a few blocks, then the command had to be repeated.

On arrival at the Tombs I had to leave Tommy for some reason which has escaped my memory, and my friend the policeman volunteered to show me round. A horrible place it was, underground and dimly lighted, big iron grating doors at intervals, with a warder standing near each one. Cages all along the corridors where people were confined awaiting their cases being called in the court above. One was full of male drunks and another of females of the same description.

In a cage by herself was some celebrated adventuress whom they seemed very proud to show. I don't remember her name or what she was accused of having done, but I

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can see her now, reclining on a couch, in evening dress, surrounded by newspaper men interviewing her, and looking very much bored with the proceedings.

After a while I had to go before the magistrate to give some details of Tommy's behaviour on board the ship, and he was then committed temporarily to a home for inebriates in the outskirts of the city. I had to take him there accompanied by the policeman, who this time produced the necessary cable car fare, to my great relief. Before doing so he extracted a promise from me that I would tell the Captain how valuable his assistance had been to me.

After interviewing the doctor at the home I left poor Tommy with him, and I don't remember ever having felt so sad as I did at that moment. He didn't seem to mind being left though, and when I put out my hand and said: "Well, good-bye, Tommy," he turned on his heels and said: "Oh, go to hell."

A day or two later the Captain and I had to appear at the home, to go before the Commissioners in Lunacy, and were taken by them into a room where Tommy was. He was duly certified insane and was sent to some asylum, and that was the last I saw or heard of poor Tommy.

When we got alongside the wharf the underwriters' representatives came on board and, after hearing the story of our voyage, were loud in their praise of our consistency in carrying on without putting into any port, and said that no doubt the underwriters would make handsome presentations to us when we reached England. I never heard of anything of the kind taking place—at any rate, nothing ever came my way, but as I never expected anything I was not disappointed.

The stevedores had to be paid extra for discharging our cargo on account of the smell of the bleaching powder, and even then they would only work two-hour spells. We had worked thirty-six on end, but our lives had been at

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stake, and in their case their pockets were the chief concern.

After our cargo was discharged we went up the Sacramento River to Benicia to load grain, were towed back again, and anchored in the bay.

Then the fun commenced—getting our new crew together.

The boarding-house keepers demanded a month and a half's advance and eighty dollars "blood-money" for each man they supplied, and there were no other means of getting any. The ship had to pay the blood-money down, and the sailors received their advance notes, payable so many days after the ship sailed, when they signed articles.

Even at that price they were hard to get and were sent off to the ship two or three at a time. Any men the boarding-house people could catch were signed on, whether they were sailors or not. Most of them came on board in a very drunken state, and an armed watchman was employed to see that they didn't get on shore again. Thank goodness there were some sailors amongst them or the Lord alone knows how we would have got on.

During the time the crew were being corralled we were busily employed bending sails. One morning "Sails" was next to me on the fore topsail yard, and said: "There's a real sailor coming up now." I looked down and saw a man in a brand new suit of dungarees with a new belt and a sheath knife, such as sailors wear, coming up the lower rigging in a leisurely way. He got no farther than the fore-top, however; then, after looking at it from all angles and not finding a way over it that he cared to risk, down he went again. Old "Sails's" language at that moment was beyond reproduction.

That evening while we were at tea in the cabin one of the sailors came aft to report that there was a man in

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a fit forward. The Captain said to me: "Go forward, Mister, and see what the trouble is."

I went, not feeling in too good a mood at having my well-earned meal disturbed, and found the same man lying on his back apparently frothing at the mouth, and kicking his legs about. Several other men were looking on interestedly.

Not knowing anything about fits and suspecting that he was skrimshanking, I said in rather a loud tone of voice: "Throw a bucket of water over him—that will bring him to."

I had hardly got the words out of my mouth when he kind of sat up and said: "Don't throw any water on me, sir; it will only make me worse." With that I gave him a kick in the place Nature had provided for the purpose, and said: "Get up, you——" something or another, and went aft again to report to the Captain and resumed my tea.

Next morning the same man and the Bosun had a difference, and he yelled that he was being murdered, and kept it up, evidently trying to attract the attention of passing boats, till he was suppressed.

Later we found out that he was a runner for a tailor and took the chance of signing on in the hope that he would be sent on shore again as unfit, and share the blood-money with the boarding-house people.

We eventually got our crew together and sailed on August 4, 1888, for Havre. On picking watches after the tug left us and all sails were set, the tailor's runner, who turned out to be a Jew, fell to my lot. The Mate, you see, had first pick, and this fellow was the last left.

It was my middle watch, midnight to 4 A.M. on the first night out, and all went well. Two good men took the wheel and steered, but I had to fire three in succession from the look-out as they apparently couldn't see.

On taking over from the Mate again at 8 A.M.—a fine

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sunny Sunday morning with a gentle quarterly wind—the first thing I noticed was that the sails were all shaking. I looked in the compass to see if the wind had shifted. It hadn't. I asked the man at the wheel what he was trying to do with the ship. He confided to me that he had never been to sea before, and after a little further questioning he told me that his last job was attendant in a leper hospital. He was perhaps acting on Jurgen's principle, "being always willing to try anything once." If so, he wasn't a success at what he was trying then.

Four others came aft in succession, who had never steered a ship before, my Jew friend of the fits amongst them, before one turned up who could handle the wheel.

My watch, consisting of nine so-called able seamen, resolved itself into: four men who could steer, three of whom had sufficiently good eyesight to be trusted on the look-out, the rest being nondescripts. Later, however, by dint of a little patience and persuasion, they were got into some kind of shape, so that they were not utterly useless.

Everything went well and we got into the English Channel in due course, arriving off Havre just after the New Year had come in, 140 days from San Francisco, and five days over the twelve months that I required to go up for my Master's certificate.

The pilots were evidently celebrating the New Year on shore, as we could see no sign of their cutter, and there was no reply to the numerous blue lights we burned as a signal that we required the services of one.

Eventually a fishing boat hailed us in very broken English, and said he would show us where to anchor. The Captain accepted his services and he came on board.

What with the Captain's Scotch and the Frenchman's limited amount of broken English, neither could understand the other, so old "Sails" stepped forward to act as interpreter, and very well he did it.

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This aroused my curiosity. After we had anchored and the sails were made fast, I asked him where he had learned his French. "Oh," he replied, "I got two years in jail once in Havre for killing a man, and picked it up there."

Next morning the pilot boarded us and we went into dock, and a few days later, after the ship had been paid off, I left wind-jammers to go into steam. Sailing ship men in those days looked on steamship men with a more or less mild contempt (amongst themselves, that is), saying that they were not real sailors, only steamboat men. Things have altered since then, and I'm not sure that even in those days their contempt wasn't mixed with a little envy.

I was sorry in a way to say good-bye to sailing ships as I had had a very happy time in them, but I put my sorrow in my pocket and crossed from Havre to Southampton, with Topsy in tow on the night of January 8, 1889.

Topsy afterwards sailed with my brother, as I couldn't take him with me, and was saved from the wreck of the *Cotopaxi*. She lived to die at home of over-eating combined with old age.

CHAPTER V

INTO STEAM

AFTER the excitement of arriving home had somewhat died down, I went to the Nautical College in Liverpool to prepare for my examination and became the proud possessor of an Ordinary Master's Certificate on February 13, 1889.

I indulged in a short holiday, and then made a few inquiries as to which first class line of steamers offered the best opportunities for promotion. I came to the conclusion that if I could get a berth in the White Star Line I would be well on the way to making my fortune, and from that day to this I have never regretted my decision to send in my application for a junior officer's position in that company.

Succeeding in making a sufficiently good impression on the partner in the firm of Messrs. Ismay, Imrie & Co., whose duty it was to pass on an officer's suitability, I was handed over to the Marine Superintendent to make inquiries as to my qualifications.

He looked through my papers, and said: "You've never been Mate."

"No, sir," I answered, "the advice I got when I first went to sea was to get my Master's certificate as soon as I could—then join some good company and stay there if possible."

He replied: "A voyage as Mate is a useful experience." My spirits fell, but he continued turning over my papers, and pondering. Then he said: "Can you join the *Coptic* in London the day after to-morrow?"

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"Yes, sir," I told him, and was there and then appointed Fourth Officer of that ship.

Luckily I had a tailor who rose to the occasion and got my uniform ready in time, though some of it had to be sent after me.

The *Coptic* sailed for New Zealand with Captain Burton in command, on March 13. I felt like a fish out of water for the first few days. Everything went on in such an orderly manner instead of in the rough-and-tumble way of a sailing ship leaving port.

I had been used to running my own watch of sailors, and now I was Junior Officer of the Watch, and it seemed to me that I had very little to do. But when I got into the routine of the ship I found out that I had plenty. Then the food and accommodation were so different—plenty of water for washing, and three good meals a day with much variety of food.

The greatest luxury that had ever come my way up to then at sea was the weekly leg of chicken, while the poultry lasted. I don't know that that was so much of a luxury after all, as, when one had watched the steward on the Saturday evening studying the hencoop to find out which of the chickens remaining was likely to die first, and then selecting it for Sunday's dinner, one's appetite was somewhat dulled when it made its appearance on the table boiled to a rag in order to make the soup that preceded it as strong as possible.

The itinerary for our New Zealand steamers in those days was out round the Cape of Good Hope and home round Cape Horn, calling at various ports en route, and a very health-giving trip it was. I have seen many passengers carried on board at London, almost hopeless invalids, going ashore on our return feeling like fighting cocks, after escaping the rigours of the winter months in England.

On my first voyage in the *Coptic* Captain Burton told

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me, after we had left one of our ports of call—Hobart, I think it was—that my brother's ship the ss. *Cotopaxi*, had been lost in the Straits of Magellan. This, of course, upset me very much, till on our arrival home I learned full details. Then I was very proud of my brother.

He had been responsible for one of the smartest bits of work that had ever been done at sea.

They were meeting a German ship in the Straits at night. The latter thought the *Cotopaxi* was another German ship belonging to the same line of steamers, and steered to pass close so as to hail her. Instead of passing close she collided with the *Cotopaxi* and made several holes below the water line in her.

My brother was called a minute or so before the collision, and after it had happened went to have a look at the chart, and saw that there was a sandy patch about four or five miles away. He made up his mind to try to beach her there. He took a chance in doing it, but he was justified by the result. She gently took the ground when practically the way was off the ship, the stokehold being flooded and the fires out.

He then ran anchors out ahead, jettisoned some of the cargo, and hove her into shallower water till the holes in her side were above water. Stages were then rigged, and the engineers, working with their legs in the very cold water, bolted patches over the holes.

When they had finished, steam was got up, and my brother set everybody, passengers as well as crew, running from side to side of the ship to loosen her in the sand, went full speed astern on the engines, and off she came. They then anchored, and after taking in most of the cargo they had jettisoned—barrels of tallow chiefly—proceeded on their way through the Straits.

As the weather was very bad off Cape Pillar, he decided to go through Smyth's Channel to lessen the strain on the ship. While they were at lunch, however, she ran over

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an uncharted rock in the middle of the channel and sank in about seven minutes. Everybody was saved though, as they had the boats swung out, ready for lowering in case of an emergency arising.

As she was sinking my brother went to his room to throw any cushions, rugs and things of that kind into a boat for the comfort of the lady passengers. There he found Topsy, my dog, sleeping peacefully on his cushion. He picked her up and stepped into a boat, out of water well up to his knees, the last man to leave the ship.

They took bearings of the land from the boats to fix the position where the *Cotopaxi* sank, and after spending two very uncomfortable days on the rocks, were picked up by a passing German steamer, and landed at Sandy Point. The passengers went on to their destinations in the first ship that called, and the crew came home in the ss. *John Elder* of the same company.

When they called at Monte Video on the way home, a Chilian man-of-war was lying at anchor, the Captain of which was a friend of my brother. He went on board and asked the Captain to sound in the neighbourhood of the position he laid off on the chart, as he was passing through Smyth's Channel on his way to Valparaiso. He very kindly did so, and found a rocky patch with 17 feet of water on it, which was the cause of the loss of the *Cotopaxi*. This patch was afterwards marked with a large buoy with *Cotopaxi* painted on it.

Amongst our 2nd Class passengers on the return trip were a detective and his "bird," as he always called him. The prisoner had run away with a jeweller's wife from some place in Gloucestershire, and what was apparently worse, had taken most of the stock with him. The man was arrested in New Zealand, and a country-looking "Chief of Police," as he called himself, was sent out to bring him home. The erring wife was left behind, so I judge she was of less importance than the stock!

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The detective allowed the prisoner full liberty while he was on board during the daytime, but locked the door of the cabin they jointly occupied when they went to bed. All went well till we arrived at Rio de Janeiro. It was afternoon, and they were both on deck. We asked the detective if it wouldn't be wiser to lock "the bird" up while we were in port, but he only smiled and touched his hip pocket, where he carried a big revolver, and said: "I have something that will bring him back if he tries to escape."

"The bird" was seen talking to several people from the shore during the evening, and the detective was again warned, but he only tapped his pocket and smiled. They went to bed as usual, and we finished coaling during the night, arrangements having been made to sail at 8 A.M. next day.

At about seven I was walking along the saloon deck when I saw the detective, looking very perturbed, peering into boats and everywhere. He asked me if I had seen anything of "the bird." I told him no. He then said that he had gone to bed very tired the night before, and had been roused by his prisoner at about four o'clock, who told him he had been seized with cramp and asked for the key of the door as he wanted to go to the lavatory. "I gave it to him and fell off to sleep again, and when I waked a short time ago he wasn't there."

I got a man or two along, and we helped him in his search, but all we found were the prisoner's overcoat under one of the after boats and a rope hanging over the stern, on which no doubt he had slid down into a waiting boat, which he had possibly arranged for the evening before.

The detective got very excited and appealed to Captain Burton to delay our sailing while he went on shore to hunt for his "bird." He received very scant sympathy from the Captain, who told him he ought to have taken better care of him while he had him, and wound up the

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discussion by saying: "You had better write a letter to the Consul, and I will arrange that he receives it."

We sailed at eight o'clock with a very distressed "Chief of Police" on board, but he soon picked up his spirits, and remarked: "I've got the swag, anyway, and that is the most important thing, so they can't say much to me when I make my report." The swag was locked up in the Purser's safe, or no doubt "the bird" would have taken that with him when he made his unceremonious departure.

Later he drew up a letter detailing the great care he had taken of his prisoner before his escape, and, to strengthen his case, got a number of the good-natured passengers to sign it. He had the hardihood to ask the governor of some prison in New Zealand, who was a fellow passenger, to put his signature on the paper, and I don't suppose he will ever forget the dressing-down he got on that occasion. It was classic, and I venture to think he thoroughly deserved it for his carelessness.

We were a happy crowd in the *Coptic*, and when we were in port, those of us who were off duty would get up picnics to go fishing, shooting rabbits, and exploring the surrounding country. On one occasion the Doctor, Purser, Chief Engineer, Second Officer and myself chartered a wagonette and drove from Port Chalmers to a place called Blueskin, in search of rabbits, which were never very difficult to find in New Zealand. A great drive it was; the road led up and over a mountain along a road cut on the edge of it, which was very steep at times and none too well guarded. Going out it was all right, as we had to walk up the steep parts; but coming back it was a different proposition. The driver stopped when we were approaching a particularly steep bit and commenced to rummage in the bottom of the wagonette. Somebody asked him what he was looking for. He replied: "We need an extra brake for this bit, and I'm looking for an old boot I keep for the purpose."

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After a vain search, being in a happy mood, he said : "I think we will be able to get down without it," climbed on his box again and off we went. The songsters amongst us had been singing up to then, but I noticed they quietened down as we got to the worst part that had a sharp turn at the bottom of it. I was in a good position to jump if anything went wrong, so felt fairly happy, but our driver negotiated the corner successfully, and the songs were resumed, though not quite with the same vim.

The Doctor was an amateur photographer of persistence, and insisted on taking snaps of "the sportsmen" whenever the surrounding scenery tickled his fancy. One he took very nearly ended in tragedy. We were all posed in the wagonette with the rabbits and guns well to the fore when, just as he was about to touch the button, the horse gave a step forward, upset the balance of one of the guns, the hammer of which hit on the wheel and went off, and the Purser came within an ace of having his head blown off—some of the shots went through his cap.

I was transferred to our Atlantic service early in 1891, being appointed Fourth Officer of the *Teutonic* on January 28, and remained in that service, passing through the various grades until I received command in 1899.

The *Teutonic* was then in the heyday of her glory, having made her first appearance, with all her guns mounted as an armed merchant cruiser, fresh from her builders, Messrs. Harland & Wolff, of Belfast, at the Naval Review that was held at Spithead in honour of the then German Emperor in 1880.

His visit to her on that occasion was the cause of the Germans building larger and faster ships for the Atlantic service; at any rate, it had something to do with it.

As the Kaiser stepped on board, accompanied by the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, and was received by Mr. Ismay and others connected with the company, he turned to one of his suite and said : "We must

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have some of these." It was shortly after that the four fast German ships made their first appearance on the Atlantic.

I don't know whether it is that I am getting older, and so see with different eyes, or whether it was that we had no societies in those days to tell us what our troubles were or what the disadvantages were that we were sailing under, but it seems to me, on looking back, that there is more unrest now amongst the officers in the Merchant Service than there was then.

I am glad and proud, however, to know that whenever an emergency arises the officers of the present day come forward just as readily as we did in our day to the assistance of our employers in getting the ships to sea, and doing everything that is possible for the comfort and convenience of the travelling public. This shows to my mind that the unrest is only skin deep after all.

Conditions then were different from now. We got very little money compared with what officers are paid now; but apparently we didn't need it, as my recollections are that we were always happy and contented.

When I had the necessary qualifications I applied for a commission in the Royal Naval Reserve, and received one as a Sub-Lieutenant in January, 1893, and shortly after that put in my first period of drill on *H.M.S. Eagle*, a dismantled old wooden frigate that was used for the purpose of training R.N.R. officers and men in Liverpool.

I must say that I was not particularly impressed with the means provided by the Admiralty for the purpose; however, we had a very good time.

I am not definitely certain that the guns we were drilled at were those with which she was supplied when she was originally commissioned as a man-of-war—in 1794 I think it was; but they might well have been, as they were old

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iron muzzle-loaders, and we had to train them with rope tackles—good exercise even if not of much use in teaching modern gunnery. The guiding principle with the Admiralty may have been that a sound training in the classics—the old muzzle-loaders taking the place of Greek and Latin—is the best foundation for a good education, but, if so, we were never informed of it by any of our instructors, so perhaps didn't take as much interest in the drill as we otherwise might have done.

It was not very encouraging, either, to be told by the instructor at the end of a long lecture on fuses, sights, and what not: "You mustn't remember any of that, gentlemen, when you go into the Navy to do your twelve months. It's all hopsolete and only used for the purpose of passing your test in this ship."

The instructors were all good men and took the greatest interest in our passing the said test examinations, so we paid sufficient attention to the lectures to be able to go before the Captain and pass.

Conditions have changed, and now R.N.R. officers put in their drill in sea-going ships, and so have a better opportunity of rendering themselves efficient.

We had the opportunity then to apply for twelve months' training in the Navy. I never went in for it, as the impression I got from those who had was that they had a very good time while they were there, but did not learn very much.

I received my promotion to Lieutenant in December, 1895, which at that time was the highest rank open to R.N.R. officers.

The old *Eagle* had her social side, too. At one time some enthusiasts thought we ought to have a band—we all subscribed towards the fund for providing instruments and collected quite a lot of money. It wasn't a success, though, as the bandsmen had to go to sea to earn their living. At a meeting of the Band Committee one day it

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was decided to sell the instruments and give a ball on the ship with the proceeds. The old *Eagle* was decorated with flags, all drill was suspended the day before the event, so that the decks could be made to resemble a dancing floor as nearly as possible, and a caterer was engaged.

It turned out a huge success, though the military officers from the barracks evidently didn't think it would be when they accepted our invitation, as rumour said that they only came from a sense of duty.

If this was so, their sense of duty must have been a very high one, as next morning at 9.30, when I was going down to the ship (I was Chief Officer at the time), I met several of them in the train returning from the ball still in their mess dress.

I had left at 1.30 A.M.

On one voyage, when I was an officer in the old *Britannic*, we had amongst our 1st Class passengers several noted prize-fighters, Peter Jackson, the negro, amongst them. He was a decent, self-respecting man, and kept himself more or less aloof from the rest of them, went to bed at a reasonable time, and if it had not been for his colour would have been even more popular on board than he was. The others were a noisy lot and were a considerable source of anxiety to the ship's people, especially towards closing time in the smoking-room.

One night things looked very ugly; two of them were preparing to settle their differences by fighting, which might have caused considerable annoyance to the other passengers. Ordinary methods of keeping the peace were of no use, and nobody liked to tackle them by force. Things were reaching a climax when somebody thought of Peter Jackson. He had turned in by this time, but very kindly turned out again, and in very short order had them both under control. He caught hold of one in each of his powerful hands and banged them together,



THE *LAOMENE* ENTERING PORT PHILIP HEADS, MELBOURNE



Photo: Stuart, Southampton.

THE *BRITANNIC*
On Transport Service in the South African War

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then took them down below to their respective rooms and told them to stay there. Which they did.

To illustrate the other side of him. At a concert one night on the *Teutonic*, in which Mr. George Grossmith, the celebrated G.G.'s father, and Mr. Wilson Barrett were crossing with us, the latter during a monologue said, "I had arranged a boxing match between my friend Grossmith and Mr. Jackson, but now Grossmith has insisted on them both using field glasses—he to use the small end and Mr. Jackson the large—and I am not sure that Mr. Jackson will accept the condition as Grossmith would have an unfair advantage." Peter's laugh drowned everybody else's.

When we reached New York and Peter was walking down the gangway, anyone who didn't know him would have taken him for an ambassador from some negro republic at the least. He looked so dignified and was so faultlessly dressed. But the crowd of his admirers who were waiting on the dock to receive him were enough to give anybody away. They were the toughest-looking lot that even New York could produce, and that is saying something.

One voyage when I was Chief Officer of the *Germanic* we had the worst gale that I ever remember experiencing in Channel. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was a passenger with us, accompanied by his wife. During the passage over he was not noted as a conversationalist, but as an asker of questions he was certainly first in the field—everybody commented on that, I remember. The weather was not very bad when we were approaching the land—as a matter of fact, we had every prospect then of calling at Queenstown as usual. After we passed the Fastnet the wind and sea increased very rapidly from the southward, so Captain McKinstry sent word below to say that we would not call at Queenstown. An irate gentleman battled his way to the bridge and insisted that we *must* call, as important cables would be waiting for him there. Captain

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McKinstry just asked him if he thought his cables were of more importance than the safety of the ship, and then ordered him to go below and stay there, as by this time the seas were breaking right over the ship and no passengers were allowed on deck.

Our Boatswain was washed overboard while endeavouring to secure No. 2 hatch which had been stove in, and nothing could be done to save him in the sea that was then running. He must have been washed right along the deck as we afterwards found his sou'-wester under the turtleback aft. After we had passed the Old Head of Kinsale, a huge sea, some of us described it as a tidal wave, swept over the ship, doing damage to her upper works, and a considerable amount of water got into the passenger accommodation and down the fiddley gratings, putting some of the fires out.

This must have been the sea that overwhelmed Daunts Rock Lightship, as she was sunk at her moorings some time during that night, and all her crew were drowned.

After the water had cleared away an officer was sent down to find out how things were in the passenger accommodation, and to reassure the passengers.

He found Mr. Chamberlain sitting on the stairs in his pyjamas and dressing-gown, with his monocle in his eye, and his feet in the water that was swishing about the companionway. The officer who was sent down is now Commodore Bartlett, Marine Superintendent of the company, and his cheery talk soon sent Mr. Chamberlain back to his room in a happier frame of mind.

The sea seemed to think it had done its worst by then, as it gradually became smoother, and in the morning the passengers very kindly made a collection for the widow of our Boatswain, in which the late Mr. Harry Furniss took a leading part. If I remember rightly, he auctioned some of his famous cartoons to swell the amount.

Towards the end of 1897 a ukase was issued by the

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managers of the White Star Line that an Extra Master's Certificate would be favourably considered for promotion, so I took the earliest opportunity I could get of going up for mine, and passed on May 13, 1898.

On June 12, 1899, I was appointed temporarily in command of the *Britannic*, by the late Mr. T. H. Ismay, while the necessary adjustments amongst the commanders were taking place owing to the advent into their Atlantic service of the *Oceanic*.

I have always been particularly proud of the fact that I received my appointment from him, especially as he was fated never to appoint another commander. His lamented death took place on November 23 in that year, and I am sure that no one felt his loss more than those of us who were sailing in his ships at that time. He was always just and considerate to us in all circumstances, and took a personal interest in our welfare.

I consider that he was the most far-seeing man that ever had to do with founding a first-class line of steamers, and I am not sure that the travelling public have ever realized the debt they owe to his foresight. He was the pioneer in introducing most of the comforts, not to say luxuries, which they now take as a matter of course.

I came across an instance of this a short time ago when I was reading a copy of *Leslie's Weekly*, date some time in 1874, after the first *Oceanic* had arrived at New York on her maiden voyage. It stated there that she was the first steamer to have baths fitted for the use of passengers.

His successors have carried on the policy inaugurated by him so far as bathing facilities are concerned, as well as in every other respect. The *Adriatic*, when she came out, was the first ship to have Turkish and swimming baths fitted for the convenience of her passengers.

I sailed on my first voyage, in command, to New York on July 19, 1899. The ship was gaily decked with flags

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from stem to stern, but not in my honour. Our present King, who was then Duke of York, was in Liverpool on that day, and had graciously consented to present the prizes to the boys on the *Conway*, and not only my ship but every ship in the river and docks was decorated in honour of him.

It was a lovely summer's day, and we had a fairly full list of passengers to embark, and I remember the thought passing through my mind as they came trooping down from the Riverside Station to the gangway, all apparently in the best of good spirits, "I wonder if these people realize that this is more or less of an experiment on my part."

I remember, too, the managers of the company, Mr. Bruce and Mr. James Ismay, Mr. Sanderson and others coming up to my room to say good-bye and to give me injunctions regarding the care I was to take and caution I was to use, and so on, and so on. They appeared so anxious to me that I began to wonder whether they, too, had the same kind of thought in their minds. I won't say that I got exactly apprehensive as to whether "the experiment" would be a success, but if I had, my apprehensions were dispelled when Mr. Graves, another of the partners, came in and said, "First voyage in command, eh! Well, I wish you the best of good luck," shook hands and went on shore with the others.

My father and mother and sisters who had been on the *Conway* for the prize distribution came hurrying down the stage as we were on the point of sailing, and it was a real joy to me to see them in the distance. They could not come on board, of course, as the company's regulations very wisely prohibit relations or friends of their officers interfering with their work by coming on board on sailing days.

On my return I was told that my father, after we had sailed, had thanked Captain Hewitt, our Marine Super-

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intendent, for his interest in me, and for my promotion. He snapped back at him, "Well, what about it—he wouldn't have got it if he hadn't deserved it." A higher commendation, coming from such a man, I never hope to get.

Captain Hewitt was supposed to be away on his holidays when I sailed, but to my great surprise he came on board by the clearance tender, which brought the Board of Trade officials off to the ship to see that everything on board was in order, while we were lying at anchor in the river, preparatory to going alongside the landing-stage.

His first words when he came on board were: "I couldn't let you go to sea on your first voyage in command without coming to wish you luck."

I couldn't find words to answer him properly, but I think he understood how grateful I felt towards him for all he had done for me.

I made three voyages to New York in the *Britannic* before the South African War started.

CHAPTER VI

TROOPS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

THE South African War did me a good turn by making my temporary command a permanent one.

I had been placed in command of the *Britannic* with the understanding that I was to step back to Chief Officer of the *Oceanic* after her first voyage.

After relieving her commander during the week she was lying in the Mersey, I got permission to go on shore during the day before sailing to say good-bye to my people. I was drawing near the tender that was lying alongside the landing-stage waiting to take me off to her again at 5 P.M., when I was hailed by the Captain of her and asked if I had seen Captain Hewitt, our Marine Superintendent.

"No," I said.

"Well," he answered, "he wants to see you at nine o'clock to-morrow at his office down at the dock," and added, "You are not going in that ship."

I told him I would go off to the ship and pack my things anyway, and make sure of them. I did so, and came on shore again about seven o'clock wondering what was in the wind.

Next morning I was down at the dock sharp at nine, and after hanging about for an hour saw Captain Hewitt's assistant, Captain Murray. He wouldn't give me any information, only told me to go to the stage and look after the tenders going off to the big ship. The "Old Man" himself went off with the Board of Trade surveyors on the clearance tender at one o'clock, and on the way I asked

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him if there was any harm in my inquiring why I was being kept on shore.

"Didn't Captain Murray tell you?" he asked.

"No, sir," I replied.

"The office people seem to think the Admiralty will want a Naval Reserve man to take command of the *Nomadic*" (one of our cargo steamers that had been taken up by them to convey horses to the Cape), he said, and finished up his remarks by saying, "You're a Warrior, aren't you?"

"I think I'm more of a man of peace, sir," I replied, "but I belong to the Reserve," and I thanked him for his interest in me.

After a few days trying to learn how horses ought to be looked after at sea, and how to make the out-of-date transport regulations fit in with modern steamships—the office people had evidently given them up as hopeless, as they had passed them on to me with many vague words of wisdom—I received the welcome news that my old ship had been taken up to carry troops and that I was to command her. We were to sail in under a week. Not much time to convert a passenger steamer into a trooper, but our people had been brought up on the idea that nothing was impossible, so it had to be done.

The Admiralty wanted sufficient coal put on board to last the ship out to Cape Town and back to St. Vincent. Our people wanted sufficient stores to last six months to go on her; then a certain amount of space had to be reserved for camp equipment, stores, etc., for the troops. But space was limited, so everything was more or less jumbled up, and when sailing day from Liverpool—October 24, 1899—came, and "The Final Inspection before Sailing" had to be gone through, I was doubtful as to whether she would pass.

I called at our office on my way down to the ship that day and received instructions to have everything in apple-

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pie order for the Inspection, an instruction I received with an inward smile, as I knew they were still piling coal and stores into her, and that probably from two to three hundred workmen were still busy on board.

We came out of dock early in the afternoon, and I must acknowledge I never saw a ship in such a mess. But I had good hopes she would be all right by the time we got to Queenstown, where we were to embark our troops. They couldn't put any more coal in her once we were out of dock, and we were going to take seventy men under our Superintendent Engineer with us to straighten everything out and see things in working order. The Final Inspection had to be got through first, that was my trouble, but I knew the Naval part of it would be sympathetic.

As soon as we anchored in the river the tender came alongside with the members of the Board, and I put on my frock-coat and my best smile to go to the gangway to receive them. But I did not feel very comfortable.

The Board consisted of a Naval Lieutenant, whom I considered a friend, an Army Captain, evidently used to difficulties and overcoming them, and an Army doctor. Some of our people from the office accompanied them.

I had made up my mind to say nothing, but to try and pour oil on troubled waters if trouble arose. Sure enough it did. Such grumbling at the state of the ship I never heard, but as the Naval Lieutenant's voice was the loudest it did not worry me much. I felt that we were in sympathy, and, ready or not ready, the ship would have to sail, and it would be "up to me" to get her ready before we reached Queenstown. We—I say "we" because the aforesaid Naval Lieutenant knew just as well as I did the state the ship was in—took them round as quickly as possible, and I think the other members of the Board of Inspection were a little bewildered when we finally reached the saloon to discuss matters. The army man seemed to think she would be all right if he had to

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embark the troops himself, but did not like to pass her on to anyone else. The medical member did not quite know whether he had seen the medical stores. These, and the general state of the ship, nothing definite, seemed to be the sum total of the complaints.

After a pow-pow in the saloon the Naval Lieutenant suggested they should go to the Divisional Transport Officer and discuss matters with him and send word off to me later whether I was to sail or not. There must have been a good deal of talk on shore before a decision was come to, as it was nearly ten o'clock that night before the tender came back with orders from the Divisional Transport Officer for me "to proceed with all dispatch to Queenstown," etc. etc.

We started almost immediately on receipt of the orders, but unfortunately next morning we were jumping into a head sea which made all the workmen seasick; however, as we were nearing Queenstown the wind dropped and the sea smoothed itself out. A dense fog settled down, and for the first and only time in my career as a sailor I was glad of a fog. We came to an anchor outside the harbour and the men were turned to, and just before the fog cleared away, about 6.0 P.M., I had the satisfaction of seeing the work finished and everything ready for taking the troops on board. We shifted to an anchorage inside the harbour and had a good night's sleep.

The morning was bright and clear. We got under way at five o'clock, and there was no prouder man in the world than our Queenstown pilot at having the opportunity of taking one of the company's ships alongside the deep water quay. It was a real pleasure to watch him strutting about on the bridge and giving his orders with both hands in his pockets.

The Embarkation Officers came on board as soon as we were moored alongside to have a look round and make arrangements. I was sitting in my room talking to our

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Assistant Marine Superintendent, who had come from London to see us off, when Colonel —, the senior Embarkation Officer, came in. "Captain," he said, "the hold that is marked on the plan for the troops' baggage and camp equipment is full of stores." I learned afterwards that the night before sailing from Liverpool, when cartload after cartload of stores were coming down to the ship, the stevedore had asked our Victualling Superintendent where he should put them, as all the store-rooms were full, and he, being much harassed, had said, "Put them anywhere, sir, I don't care a damn where; they've got to go in the ship." The stevedore put them in the only empty space he could find.

I went out with the Colonel to look for myself, and sure enough it was nearly full; however, he was a reasonable man, and we found holes and corners all over the ship where baggage could be stowed. Luckily for us the regiment we were about to embark had just returned from foreign service and was travelling light, so we managed to get everything in with a little management before the troops arrived, everything but their kit-bags having been sent down in advance.

The General (commanding the district) and his wife and Staff came on board during the morning. I showed them round the ship, and I must say that considering the hurry-up job of fitting her out she looked very well. The General was pleased with the arrangements, but his lady seemed to feel pity for the men who were going to occupy our troop-decks, a notion which the General pooh-poohed, saying: "War-time, my dear—I am sure they will be very well off."

The trains arrived somewhere about eleven, and I thought that the men, though of fine physique, looked travel-stained and weary considering they had only been travelling for one night. When I mentioned the fact to some of the officers afterwards, they explained that the

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men had the night before fought what might possibly be the hardest battle of the campaign with the good folk of Belfast. The people had turned out in their thousands, all armed with bottles of whisky, to give the regiment a good "send-off," and as it was a pouring wet night and the men had literally to fight their way through the streets, it was no wonder that they did not look spick and span when they came on board. They had been delayed, too, by having to hunt for stragglers who, overcome by the warmth of the "send-off," had missed their way to the station. They were only one man short when the roll was called on board, which to my mind showed the keenness of the men for active service.

The pilot told me that the Queenstown people had booed and hooted at the transports that had sailed from there before us because they were not in sympathy with the war. I offered to make a bet with him that we would not be treated in a similar way, but he, being a cautious man, wouldn't bet, and only answered: "Maybe not, sor, your ships calling here regular may make a difference." And they didn't. As a matter of fact, I never saw, with one exception which will be mentioned in due course, such a scene of enthusiasm as there was when we sailed about four o'clock in the afternoon. The gates at either end of the wharf had been closed during the embarkation (probably the authorities did not want a repetition of the Belfast scenes) and just as we cast off they were opened and the people rushed on the wharf cheering and shouting encouragement to the troops. Some of them wanted old Kruger's hat brought back to them. "Ay, and his head in it," added another wild Irishman.

So we left, and all along the harbour were crowds of people cheering, and every window seemed to have a flag in it with somebody waving it, and those that hadn't flags waved quilts and sheets and all kinds of garments. It was all very inspiring. But there were pathetic

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scenes, too, as sailing-time drew near—officers and men saying good-bye to the loved ones they might never see again.

If they felt any depression, however, they soon threw it off under the guidance or pressure of their Adjutant. Such a busy man I never saw; he seemed to be all over the place at once and had a cheery word for everyone. There was method in his energy, too, as he had "Boat and Fire Stations" exercised and the men all settled down before we reached Roches Point at the entrance to Queenstown Harbour. The pilot left us there and the last good-byes were said, or rather waved, as the tender moved off. She gave us three blows on her whistle as she turned back to Queenstown, and that was the last of home for many of them.

It seemed unnatural to me to put the ship away to the southward instead of to the westward where she had been used to going for so many years, and she seemed to think so too, as she commenced to jump right away into a head sea as if she did not like it.

On the way to Las Palmas the men were exercised at physical drill each morning, and in the afternoons their officers treated them to lectures; in the evenings they had sing-songs amongst themselves, and all seemed happy and contented.

I had almost forgotten to mention the getting up of stores. That was the most serious business of all, and large fatigue parties were the order of the day to hunt for them, scattered as they were down every hold in the ship. It was then that I realized the disadvantage of the ship being fitted out in such a hurry. At the earliest opportunity, as soon as the coal was out of it, I commandeered one of the orlop decks and turned that into a store-room and we had no further trouble on that score for the remainder of the three years the ship remained in the Transport Service. No one seemed to miss it, that was the

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funny part of it to me, though I was prepared to defend my action if anyone had ever wanted to put coal in that particular deck again.

The Colonel was very keen on giving the men practice in shooting, and we all exercised our ingenuity in manufacturing targets that would tow astern—none of them seemed to stand for long at the speed we were going. The best device was an old coal basket on the end of a wire, but the Tommies seemed to take a delight in firing at the wire, so the supply was soon exhausted. Perhaps they were not so keen on shooting as the Colonel was, as it kept them away from their favourite game of "House," the only gambling game apparently allowed (though others were played surreptitiously). "House" was played with cards with numbers on them, all differently arranged in lines, and a hat full of numbers. The cards were sold, and whoever got one of his lines full first won and received a certain proportion of the money paid for the cards—the two men running the show getting the rest. It went on practically all day and as long as they could see at night. The first thing you would hear would be: "Who'll have a card?" and as soon as the man selling them had got rid of sufficient to make it pay he would shout out to his pal: "Now, Jimmie [or whatever his name was], start her up." Jimmie would sit down on the deck and the players would group themselves round him, and he would start: "Number 66, Top of the 'ouse No. 57," and so on until someone would shout: "'Ouse." Then his card would be handed up and compared with the numbers in front of Jimmie and if pronounced "Correct," he would be paid and the game go on again. As there were several games going on at once in the vicinity of my room it got a little monotonous for me, but the soldiers never seemed to tire of it.

We arrived at Las Palmas one morning bright and early and anchored close to one of our men-of-war, sta-

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tioned there to look after the coaling, etc., of the transports. Her steam pinnace came alongside almost immediately after we had anchored, and a very energetic, not to say fussy Lieutenant, accompanied by our Vice-Consul, I believe he was, came up to my room and said that the troops were wanted at the Cape as quickly as possible, and could I do without taking any coal or water and proceed at once?

I told him I had sufficient coal, but that I must have some water.

He then asked me how long it would be before I would be ready to sail.

"Two hours after the water-boat gets alongside," I said, and then, glancing out of my window, I saw two coal lighters being towed off to the ship, and added: "We may as well take in as much coal as we can while we are waiting." He agreed to that—then looking at his watch, he said: "I can tell the Captain you will sail at eight o'clock, then?"—it was then six.

"No," I said, "two hours after the water-boat gets alongside."

He then turned to the Consul man and asked how long that would be, and he said that he didn't quite know, but he thought about a quarter of an hour.

"Well, I can tell the Captain you will sail at half-past eight, then," he insisted.

"No," I said again, "two hours after the water-boat gets alongside."

He got in a temper at that.

"It's the same thing, and I'll tell him half-past eight."

"Not from me," I said, but he didn't give me time to get my "two hours after the water-boat gets alongside" out, before he, followed by the Consul, both in a desperate hurry, was off and into his pinnace and on his way back to the man-of-war.

The coaling went merrily along and we were all look-

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ing anxiously for the water-boat, as we, too, were in a hurry to get away, when at nine o'clock back came the steam pinnace and the same Lieutenant hailed me, and shouted in rather a fierce voice :

"The Captain wants to know why you are not away, sir?"

"Because the water-boat is not alongside yet," I answered as politely as I could, and felt like adding: "If you had displayed as much energy in hustling the water-boat as you have in badgering me we would have been away long ago," but didn't. I have always been taught that a still tongue is a wise one.

He then went and did what he ought to have done at first, steamed in shore and towed the water-boat off to us. About an hour later he came off again and shouted from the pinnace: "The Captain says you are to cast off the coal lighters immediately and sail as soon as you have sufficient water on board," so we concluded that someone else had also lost his temper.

We cast off the lighters and they drifted astern until they were picked up by the tug—it was lucky they were seen from the shore otherwise they might have drifted on to the rocks, and then there would have been an argument as to whose responsibility that was. It was certainly not mine.

One of the small P. & O. transports had arrived shortly after us and had gone inside the breakwater, done all she wanted and steamed out again about half an hour before we had finished taking in our water and were ready to sail. The man-of-war hoisted the signal, "Well done," as she passed out. When we sailed we did not get "Well done," but we had our water, which, after all, was of more importance to us, and I never heard of any more transports being delayed from the same cause. On subsequent occasions when we called there, the coal and water came alongside together, so our little "breeze" did good.

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While we were lying at Las Palmas the Colonel and some of his officers had paid a visit to the man-of-war, and came back to the ship full of an idea for a target that they were sure would work. They had a plan of it, so I set the carpenter to work and in a day or two it was finished, iron fin, keel and all, including a flag-staff with a piece of red bunting nailed to it for the men to fire at. I donated a coil of rope, and there was great excitement next morning after parade when we were going to launch it. I had sent for some sailors to attend to the rope part of the business, but the soldier men couldn't wait, and we got aft just in time to see the end of the rope going over the stern. I remarked: "Well, Colonel, that finishes it—I have no more rope to waste, even if the carpenter had the time to make another target." He couldn't say anything.

On inquiring how they had made such a mess of it, I was told that the "Tommies" who had been stationed to slack away round the winch had stood inside the flakes of rope, and when they felt it tightening round their legs had let go in order to extricate themselves; if some of the others hadn't had presence of mind enough to grab them and lend a hand they would probably have gone over the stern as well as the target and rope. As it was, they got themselves skinned.

After this we used box-kites, made on board, for target practice, and they did just as well as anything, and as the kites were very erratic in their movements they were very seldom hit. The poop was a good place to keep clear of, though, during the firing.

About this time the "Tommies" commenced to grumble about the continual salt beef and pork and hard bread put on board by the Government for their use, so the Purser and I held a consultation. We had, in fact, spent many evenings together studying the transport regulations to find out exactly how we stood regarding our relations with the officer commanding the troops. I wanted them to be

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friendly, at the same time I wanted to find out where my responsibilities began and his ceased. Our study stood me in good stead on the few occasions that we came in conflict. He, as a rule, was not very familiar with the regulations (Admiralty), and as we were well up in them of course we had the whip-hand when little troubles arose, which I am pleased to say was not very often.

As a result of our consultation we told the Colonel that we had any quantity of fresh meat in our refrigerators, and if he would request us in writing to supply some to the men we would take it "On charge," as the regulations call it, and give it and also flour to them three days a week. He was very glad to do so. His letter was attached to our accounts when they went in to the Admiralty, and there was no question raised.

As I have no cooking stories of my own, I will try to tell one that happened in another of our ships that was engaged in the Transport Service—a ship that had all her cooking arrangements right up to date, with salt and fresh water taps all over the galley.

There were constant rows as to who was boss between the ship's troop cook and the Sergeant cook until one day when it was settled once for all. It was a pea soup day, and everything went swimmingly in the galley that morning until dinner-time when the soup was served out to the different messes. They had barely finished serving the last man before the first one was back, saying: "Here, Cookie, what's the matter with this soup?"

"Nothing," replied the Sergeant.

Then the row commenced, as all the men from the different messes came back with their soup ration, and all kinds of remarks, more forcible than polite, were bandied about. The troop cook said nothing beyond that the Sergeant had made it. The Adjutant was sent for, and he discovered that the soup had been made with salt water, and the matter was referred to the O/C Troops. It turned

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out that the Sergeant had turned the salt-water tap on instead of the fresh, and that the troop cook had watched him doing it and had said nothing; after hearing both sides the O/C Troops decided that for the future the troop cook was to be boss, and the Sergeant had a very bad time after that from the "Tommies." "Who spoiled the soup?" was the salutation he got every few minutes of the day.

Two days after we crossed the Equator we met one of the Union Castle mail steamers, and she signalled to us "Five British Victories," and gave the numbers of Boers killed and wounded. This made everyone impatient to get there before the war finished, and set them saying, "We are going to be late," and "What was the use of sending us out when we had just returned from foreign service?" and things of that kind. They seemed disappointed, too, at missing "the fun," as they called it. However, when we arrived at Cape Town we heard quite a different story, and they found out they were wanted after all.

We made the Cape Town lights at night and steamed close in and burned our signals, fully expecting that orders as to what we were to do would be sent off to us. Nothing happened, not even an answer to our night signals, and I came to the conclusion that the people here were not in such a hurry as they had been at Las Palmas. I stood off till daylight, then went into the bay and anchored. Shortly after anchoring a launch with the Staff Disembarking Officer on board came alongside and gave the O/C Troops his orders, and we got newspapers which did not give us much news. I found out afterwards that one had to wait for the home papers to get any reliable information as to what was happening at the front. After breakfast I went on shore to report my arrival to the Principal Transport Officer, and received orders that we were to come inside when another transport went out,

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and disembark our troops; a visit to our agents, and I went off to the ship again.

Before going on shore I had asked the Purser if he required anything in the way of stores, and he said we wanted fresh milk. On my way to the Transport Officer I met a man who seemed anxious to supply the ship with anything we required, and as he was the representative of the biggest firm in Cape Town, I told him we wanted fifty gallons of milk. I noticed that he jumped when I said that, but I paid no attention and went on:

"I will be glad if you will have two of them waiting for me to take off in the boat and bring the rest down to the ship when we come alongside," I shouted back.

While I was up town I heard that milk was selling from three to four shillings a gallon and hard to get at that, so I was relieved to hear the man say when I got down to my boat that he was sorry he had been unable to get any. I wasn't a bit grieved!

On board I found that the O/C Troops had received the same orders about disembarking as I had, and he had all the men paraded on deck in readiness. Then commenced a weary waiting, and I was struck with the wonderful patience of "Tommy Atkins." All through that day they remained on parade without a murmur—no "House" or anything to relieve the monotony—until at seven o'clock a Staff Officer came on board. Then they were dismissed.

This officer had brought—I was going to say a note—but it wasn't really a note, just an old used envelope torn open and, scribbled on the inside was: "How much coal have you? How many horses can you take? Nine will be sent off at nine o'clock, and after embarking General Gatacre and his Staff you are to proceed to East London with the troops you now have on board and report to the Transport Officer there." It was signed by the P.T.O.

I replied to all his questions and asked for some water, which I didn't get, and sailed without.

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About nine o'clock a launch came alongside with the General and his Staff, but, thank goodness, no horses, as we had nowhere to put them, unless we tied them to the ship's rail—which was what I had suggested in my letter to the P.T.O. The General's first remark when he stepped over the gangway was: "Thank God to be on board a decent ship again." (I learned afterwards that he had come out in a ship, not a transport, that had broken down five times on the way to the Cape.) His remark made it all the harder for me to answer his next question, which was: "Are you ready to sail at once?"

I had to tell him that the Chief Engineer was doing some small repairs down below but would soon be finished. He got very impatient at this, and said something about "Nothing but delays," and then asked for dinner. As we had naturally expected that they would have had their dinner coming on board at that time, none was ready, but we pacified him on that point by getting chops and steaks and things of that kind under way. Then I went along to stir the Chief up by telling him what a hurry the General was in, and in about half an hour he sent up word to me that everything was finished. I went down to the saloon to tell the General the welcome news, as I thought it would be, and after I had told him he calmly replied: "Have my men come?"

This question annoyed me.

"No one has come since you came, General," I answered, "but I was under the impression that it was the ship that was causing delay, and now it appears that it is your men."

He only smiled—he had finished his dinner by this time—and said: "Twenty of my Military Police have to come, and they ought to be here by now."

They came about an hour later, and then we sailed for East London.

Next morning the ship's decks were a scene of unusual

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activity, and the General was here, there and everywhere, lecturing first one group of men and then another, in homely language, too, that they could understand. He gave the officers a lecture on the importance of looking after things for themselves. He was full of energy and did not spare himself. He had evidently got his eye on the Admiralty stores I had left on board, for at about eleven o'clock his A.D.C. came into my room and asked me how many stores I had left. I told him sufficient for 1,000 men for so many days. "You are to land them all at East London," he said.

"I'm afraid I can't," I told him, "as I am responsible to the Admiralty for them."

"But you must, the General says so, and he will be responsible."

"But the General has no authority over me," I retorted. He commenced to browbeat a little.

"There's no use talking to you, I will go and explain the situation to the General."

The General was evidently a man who did not waste any time, because when his A.D.C. commenced to tell him about our interview, he said: "You shut up, let him speak."

I told him in a very few words that if the Naval Transport Officer at East London gave me orders he could have the lot so far as I was concerned. On arrival there the Naval Transport Officer would not take the responsibility, so telegraphed for instructions to Cape Town, and eventually the General got about half the stores. Our Adjutant told me during the afternoon that the General said regarding them: "If I don't collar them somebody else will."

"Yes," I said, "that's all very well, but where would I have come in if I had let him collar them?"

He not only wanted to "collar" the Admiralty stores but wanted the regiment to buy all the ship's as well.

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As we had such an abundance on board I did sell them some for the Officers' Mess—whisky and tinned stuff of all kinds—as they had embarked under the mistaken notion that no private stores were allowed.

We arrived at East London next day about two o'clock, and the officials came off immediately and a discussion was held as to whether the troops should be disembarked that afternoon or the next morning, as they would not be entrained till the next afternoon. The General's voice carried the day, and the orders were to disembark immediately, even though no arrangements had been made for the reception of the troops on shore.

The usual method of landing people at East London when the ship is too deep, as mine was, to cross the bar of the Buffalo River, is by baskets lowered from a derrick rigged out over the ship's side. We had two of these derricks which could be used for the purpose, and, in addition, as the sea was smooth, tenders came alongside and our two gangway ladders were used. Even all this wasn't quick enough for General Gatacre, who was the busiest man engaged in disembarking the troops, and he asked me if I had got any pieces of rope. Ropes were produced, and one end being made fast to the rail of the ship and the other thrown into the lighter, Tommy, with his rifle slung round him, was told to slide down them. He did, too, enjoying the fun, though sometimes he skinned his hands or his shins in the process.

Before the Colonel went on shore all the papers were signed, and I was very glad to find that he had given us and the ship a very good name in his "Voyage Report" which had to be forwarded to the Admiralty. He also gave me a very nice letter to be forwarded to the owners of the ship, expressing his appreciation of all we had done to make them comfortable during the voyage. This was very gratifying to me, and what was even more so, was that the "Tommies" as they left gave three hearty cheers

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for the old ship, which were just as heartily returned by my crew.

In the morning, the second in command of the regiment came alongside in a tender and I could not help being struck with his appearance.

"Why, Major, whatever have you been doing to yourself, you look tired out?" I said, and he replied: "Oh, I've been up all night marching the men about trying to find somewhere for them to sleep and get them something to eat."

I set the crew to work shifting coal to the bunkers, and, as we lay at anchor there for ten days without being disturbed, we had it all finished and the ship cleaned up before we received orders, on a good Sunday afternoon, to proceed to Cape Town. We had our anchor up and were off before they had quite finished signalling our orders from the shore. We were all tired of doing nothing.

We pushed the ship round to Cape Town thinking that perhaps as we had been telegraphed for on a Sunday we might be wanted in a hurry, and as soon as our anchor was down I went on shore to report my arrival, and was told by the P.T.O. to remain in the bay and "mark time" for a bit. We did not "mark time" for long, however, as in two or three days I received orders to come inside to coal before returning to Southampton for more troops.

When I commenced writing these recollections of the Transport Service, I made up my mind to mention no names, but there is one man whose name stands out so prominently in my recollections that I cannot help mentioning it—Sir Edward Chichester, the Principal Transport Officer for South Africa, affectionately called by all who had the pleasure of serving under him, "The P.T.O." He was, without any question, the right man in the right place, and through all the troubles and trials of the war, even when his son was shut up in Ladysmith, down with enteric fever, he showed the same cheery, genial face to

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everybody, and so long as any one of us, the Masters of the transports, did his bit, to use a colloquialism, he was our friend. He ruled the Cape Town docks with a rod of iron, yet one never felt the rod, so kindly was it applied. He was a typical Naval Captain of the old school, and no one mourned his death, which occurred some few years after he had returned from South Africa, more than those who had served under him at the Cape.

A very pleasant time to look back on was from 10.30 to 10.45 each morning at the Clock Tower, then "The Court was closed," the lower door was shut, and Mike, the P.T.O.'s Kafir messenger boy, was put on guard to admit no one till the Court was opened again, and Sir Edward dispensed his hospitality to all who happened to be in his office at the time. An amusing story used to be current about this showing that "Mike" was no respecter of persons where his orders were concerned.

One day the Admiral on the station came to call on Sir Edward just as "the Court was closed," and Mike wouldn't let him up.

"But I want to see Sir Edward Chichester," expostulated the Admiral.

"Can't help it, sir," said Mike, "the Court's closed."

Eventually, however, the Admiral persuaded him to take in his card, and Sir Edward went down himself to bring him up, and the Admiral was initiated into the mysteries of the closing of the Court and complimented Sir Edward on the faithfulness of Mike.

Before he left South Africa he was kind enough to accept an invitation to dine with us, the Masters of the transports, at the City Club, an evening I always look back on as one outstanding of the three years I was employed in the Transport Service. Sir Edward was geniality itself, and his speech, in returning thanks for the toast of his health and a model of the Clock Tower, which he was good enough to accept from us, was the feature of

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the gathering. He even made us feel proud of ourselves and the part we were taking in prosecuting the war, such was his eloquence.

Colonel Stone, the United States Consul at Cape Town, was amongst those who accepted our invitation to meet Sir Edward, and he made us feel prouder of our P.T.O., if such a thing were possible, than before, by referring to some episode at Manila, during the Spanish-American war. "A few little words spoken," was the way he referred to what Sir Edward did, in which Admiral Dewey, the German Admiral, and Sir Edward Chichester were concerned, and he gave us a very strong impression that our guest had been of the greatest assistance to the United States on that occasion. But he would not say what the words were, though I am afraid some of us got a little noisy in pressing him to do so.

It was while we were inside coaling, too, that we became acquainted with the Military Staff Officers, and they were much more numerous at this time than they were the next time we were at Cape Town, and when we asked after some of the men we missed, we got the reply: "Oh, they're up at the front being Egyptianized." Lord Roberts with his Chief of Staff, Lord Kitchener, had arrived in the meanwhile.

It was most amusing to watch the Kafirs coaling the ship. The coal was brought alongside, bagged, in carts, and as soon as they would see the cart turning on to the jetty away they would rush to meet it. Each would grab a bag and would race back to the ship and dump it down the shoots leading into our coal bunkers. Then, as soon as the cart was empty, they would squat down in a circle and commence some game with their fingers, which I could never fathom though I watched them often. It was a great source of amusement to them, though, as they would keep jabbering and laughing all the time they were playing.

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A few days finished the coaling, then we sailed for Southampton to call at St. Vincent on the way for coal, without a soul on board except the crew. At St. Vincent we received news of the various defeats our arms had sustained in South Africa during "Black Week," and the gloom that was cast over the ship was further intensified by our hearing that the regiment we had taken out so full of life and good spirits had been badly cut up at Stormberg.

We reached Southampton on a Sunday morning, and when things had quieted down after getting alongside, I was sitting in the smoke-room discussing things in general with the Doctor and Purser. A gentleman walked in who appeared to take a keen interest in the ship. After talking a little while he asked me if I would show him some of our troop decks. I did so, and as we were walking towards the gangway he said: "It will give me great pleasure to report to the Admiralty the good order and clean condition in which your ship has arrived." He then told me that he was the Divisional Transport Officer. His remarks made the old ship, as represented by me, feel quite proud of herself, as there is nothing like creating a good impression at first. It takes a lot to upset it.

Now that I have more or less described my first impressions of the Transport Service, I will say something about the ship and how we tried to make her a success in that service.

"The Old Ship," we used to call her, and do still for that matter whenever any of us who sailed in her during her career as a transport meet.

No trouble was too great for any of the people who sailed under me to make her a success, and no words can express the pride I felt in her when on one day that I called at the Admiralty in London, the Director of Transports himself said to me: "Yours is one of the few ships from which we have never had a complaint." She was

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proud of herself, too, I am sure, just as proud as when she succeeded in breaking the record across the Atlantic some years before and in holding it over three years.

Her 1st Class accommodation had not been altered very much during the fitting out, just a few rooms taken away for hospital use, so that we had more room than was required for the officers corresponding to the troops we were able to carry. This was taken advantage of to send nurses out, and later on, after the first rush of troops was over, officers' wives and so on as "indulgence" passengers. We often had as many as twenty ladies on board, which was a pleasure, and they were always very kind in helping to make the time pass pleasantly for everybody, entering into the sports and entertainments we got up with great zest.

As an instance of this, I remember on one occasion we had quite a number of nurses and civil surgeons going out with us, and one of the events in the athletic sports was a tug-of-war, eight doctors against twelve nurses. The nurses won the first pull and the doctors the second, and as they were very evenly matched excitement ran high as to which side would win the third and final one. Both teams got in position and took the strain, the handkerchief was dropped to start them, and they were pulling for all they were worth when suddenly the false teeth of No. 1 on the nurses' side came out and dropped on the deck. Did she stop pulling on account of this? Not much! She just pushed them on one side with her foot and went on pulling harder than ever, and eventually amidst the cheers of the onlookers they pulled the doctors over the line and won. No. 1 picked up her teeth, retired for a moment or two, and then came back to receive the congratulations she so richly deserved for the excellent way in which she had captained her team.

The same maxim applies to officers and men on a transport as is contained in the advice the old married

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lady gave to the newly wedded bride when she asked her how to keep her husband contented and happy : "Feed the brute." We went on that principle, and though we never found either the officers or men "brutes," it worked.

We were always well supplied with everything that was in season. The question of making money out of the victualling of the troops never entered into our employers' minds—at least that was the impression we got from them when we started, and we certainly acted on it and were never checked by them for doing so. Everybody who ever travelled with us said that we kept the best table in the Transport Service and that we had the best cook, which was another advantage in making the ship popular. The ship was supplied, too, with the best of drinkables. The wines could not be bought in bond at the prices we had to sell them by the transport regulations.

When the ship was supplied so liberally by her owners, it was no wonder that we all did our best to keep her in the service and to see that no complaints were made about her.

We had to watch that though, as some few of the O/C Troops considered it the proper thing to say something against the ship in their Voyage Reports, until we reasoned with them. The plan we adopted was this—towards the end of the passage the Purser would see the Adjutant and talk about the papers, and the hurry of disembarkation, etc., and then would suggest that he should have the reports ready two or three days before we arrived, leaving the dates blank so that they could be filled in at the last moment. They always agreed to do this, as the Purser was an adept at persuading people that what was easiest for him was best for them. Then as soon as they were completed he would bring them up to my room and we would go through them together ; it was only on two occasions that we found anything we wanted altering, and in each case we managed to get what we wanted.

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The first O/C to complain was a newly promoted Lieutenant-Colonel, full of beans, who could not find anything to say against the ship herself, but as he had had three unfortunate "Tommies" up before him at different times for drunkenness, he put on his Voyage Report: "Three cases of drunkenness occurred during the voyage, and in my opinion the liquor was obtained from the ship's people." This touched us on a "sore spot," as we rather prided ourselves on the efficacy of the precautions we had taken to prevent this very thing happening.

The Purser and I consulted together, and as a result the O/C Troops was asked to come to my room for a few moments. When he came in I showed him his Voyage Report and said: "Colonel, don't you think this is rather a serious accusation you are making against the ship's people without any grounds for doing so?"

"Oh!" he said, "that's only an expression of opinion."

"Well," I replied, "to my mind the Voyage Report is not a place for expressions of opinions but for facts, and I will be much obliged if you will withdraw it."

"No such thing," he said, "it's my opinion and I've written it, and it's got to stand."

"All right, Colonel," I said, "it does not matter to me what you write, but I suppose you know that I have my side of the Voyage Report for my remarks, and the reason I asked you to come here was to tell you what I am going to write, so that you could alter yours if you liked and save me the trouble of writing."

He said it was a matter of indifference to him what I wrote and did not want to hear my side at all, but at last I got him to listen.

"This is what I am going to put: 'With regard to the three cases of drunkenness mentioned in the O/C Troops report, the first case occurred the night we left Gibraltar, the second the night we left Las Palmas, and the third man, in his defence, said that he had brought

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the liquor on board with him. This, to my mind, points to lack of supervision on the part of the O/C Troops in not preventing liquor coming on board at these ports and not to the liquor having been obtained from the ship's people.' "

"All right, write what you like, I don't care," he retorted, and walked out.

As soon as he had gone the Purser said to me: "He'll be asking me for clean Voyage Reports in the morning and I'll keep him on tenter-hooks for a bit before giving them to him." Sure enough he did, and when he got them omitted all mention of drunkenness when filling them up!

The other occasion was more complicated as the Colonel commanding the Yeomanry regiment we were taking out was not the O/C Troops. By the transport regulations the senior Military Officer, for duty on board, must take on the duties of O/C Troops, and we had a Colonel of a cavalry regiment with us, who, of course, was senior to the Yeomanry man, but he deputed his duties to him, probably considering that it would be simpler if the officer in charge of the regiment was also the one to look after things as O/C Troops. Unfortunately for the smooth working of this arrangement the Yeomanry Colonel had a grievance against the Purser of the ship. He had been Quartermaster of another Yeomanry regiment in the early days and had gone out to the Cape in one of our ships on which my Purser was then serving, and they had had some friction regarding the accommodation required for a Quartermaster. It seemed to us as if he was going to try and pay off old scores, as hardly a day passed on which either he or his Adjutant did not complain about something or other. But we, knowing the ropes, usually got the better of them.

When the time came for getting the Voyage Report in we got, as we expected, a very bad one, but as the remarks

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were only the Yeomanry Colonel's views we did not take them seriously, and I sent my compliments to the O/C Troops and asked him if he would kindly step into my room.

"Colonel, your Voyage Report is, to say the least of it, inaccurate and also unjust to the ship," I commenced, but before I could say any more he interrupted and said: "Why, what's the matter with it—I haven't even seen it—Colonel —— has been acting as O/C, and he has made it out?"

"Of course I know that, Colonel, but you are the man who is responsible and to whom we look, and I would prefer your remarks to his."

He then asked me what it was I took exception to, and I told him the whole report was full of ridiculous charges and statements, and, after reading it, he agreed with me, and took it away with him to have it rewritten. Shortly after he came back and said that Colonel —— didn't want to alter anything.

"That's your business, Colonel," I said, "but if this report isn't altered more in accordance with the truth I shall have to demand an inquiry as soon as we arrive at Cape Town, and that will mean a lot of bother for everybody."

We had some other officers going out with us to rejoin their regiments, and the O/C called a "Board of Officers" to consider what should be done, and eventually the Voyage Report was very much modified and to our satisfaction.

We told the Disembarking Staff the yarn (unofficially) when we arrived, and they only laughed and said it would not have mattered if the Voyage Report had gone in as it was originally made out, as "The Old Ship" was too well known for it to do her any harm.

Her Chief Engineer was a bit of a wizard we used to think. He seemed to know every squeak her engines gave,

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and if she ever gave one at the wrong time he was out of his room, night or day, and seemed to know by instinct the exact spot that required attention. We never had to stop for repairs at sea during the whole time, a fact which speaks volumes as to his care.

He was a terror to the contractors who supplied us with coal at the various ports. He always got "his coal," as he called it, and many a time I was appealed to by the coal contractors to settle a dispute over the amount received. I always took the Chief's side, of course, and often told them that if they were not satisfied with the amount the Chief said he had received to send their bill to the Admiralty without its being signed and we would forward our reasons for not signing it, but they never did. We called several times at a certain port in Australia and had to take a good quantity of coal there, and our Chief got the reputation of being the only Chief Engineer who had ever got the full amount he had signed for from that particular port.

Once while we were lying there coaling and had no troops on board I thought, as the owners of my ship had business relations there, it would be a good idea to give a dinner to the leading people. I issued the invitations and had quite a number of acceptances, the Collector of Customs at the port and the manager of the company that was supplying us with coal amongst the number, and we had a very pleasant evening. When we were about half-way through dinner the foreman who was looking after the coaling sent in a message that he would like to speak to the manager as there was a dispute about the weights, so he went out to him. After he had left I said something about the rows we had had before.

"Perhaps that explains something that has often puzzled me," the Collector of Customs said.

"What?" I asked.

"Well, there is a considerable amount more coal goes

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out of this port than comes in," he said, "and we haven't any mines in the neighbourhood and use a certain amount on shore."

I wanted to go out and join the row with this information up my sleeve, but as the Collector asked me not to, I didn't, as I knew the Chief would get all he signed for.

The sailors and firemen did their best to make the time pass pleasantly for the troops; they would gamble with them—which we did our best to prevent, but it was hopeless, as they used to have scouts on the look-out for anyone likely to interfere with their amusements. "Crown and Anchor" seemed to be their favourite game, played with dice and a painted piece of canvas with figures on it. Stories used to be current of fabulous sums (considering the small amount of pay the soldiers got) being lost and won. Once when we were on our way to Australia a fireman was running a "Crown and Anchor" board in the alleyway when a pretty big sea came on board and washed fireman, "Bushmen," Crown and Anchor board, and everything forward. No one was hurt, but the proprietor of the game lost his cap overboard, and rumour said there was over thirty-nine pounds in it.

Then again, a drummer-boy attached to one of the regiments we were taking out to the Cape, sent fifty pounds home to two sweethearts he had left behind him. The Captain of his company, when telling me the story, said that he had divided it equally between them, so it looked as if they both stood equally well in his affections.

While I am on the gambling topic, the pithiest sermon I ever heard was delivered by a Gunner Colonel on board one Sunday after Church service. He had read the Benediction and went on in almost the same breath: "Now, men, there's a lot of damned gambling going on, and it's got to stop—the next man that is caught I'll put in the cells and keep him there—dismiss."

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Money seemed to burn a hole in "Tommy's" pocket, and as they were paid at sea there was always plenty of it about; they would buy anything from anybody so long as it was offered with sufficient persistency. Water, with two or three lemons to the bucket, called "Coolers," they would buy at a penny a glass. "Fizzers," a little lemon kali in a mug of water, was another favourite drink of theirs, and the speculative members of the crew used to buy the materials on shore and sell them when they got to sea. We tried to stop it for a long time, until one day, when I learned the true inwardness of "Tommy's" attitude towards money, and after that, so long as no intoxicants or ship's stores were sold and the O/C Troops did not object, we did not interfere.

One morning as I was going along the deck I caught a fireman sitting on a steam-pipe selling "Coolers." I kicked his bucket over first and then told him what would happen if I caught him again. Then, thinking to improve the occasion, I turned round to the soldiers who were near and had evidently been patronizing him. "You are just as bad as he is," I told them, "you can see what there is in his bucket, a pennyworth of lemons and a little sugar, and after the bucket is empty he fills it up again at the pump and you go on buying it at a penny a glass."

"Well, sir," came the reply, "what's the use of the money to us, we're only going out to be shot?"

"If that's the way you look at it I won't bother myself any more," I said, and after that the cry of "Who'll 'ave a cooler?" and "Who'll have a fizzer?" went on merrily more or less all day, especially round the Tommies playing "House."

I don't think that "Mr. Tommy Atkins" as a rule is much of an enthusiast over religion. There are four kinds recognized in the Army—Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan—and somehow I got the impression that most of the men professed to belong

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to that particular persuasion which was not represented by a clergyman on board, and so tried to escape attending service. One voyage, arrangements had been made for two services to be held simultaneously on either side of our saloon deck, Church of England and Roman Catholic. The Sergeant-Major, in order to ensure everybody attending one or other of the services, used to add a little to the orders for the day issued by the O/C Troops, and after breakfast every officer, almost, used to gather round to hear him reading the orders to the various Sergeants. One Sunday it would be "Church of England fall in at 10.30 on the starboard side of the deck—Roman Catholics fall in on the port side of the deck—all fancy religions will fall in with the Church of England," and on the next Sunday to show his strict impartiality it would be: "All fancy religions fall in with the Roman Catholics," and in this way he kept the men who did not belong to either community out of mischief.

When the weather permitted, we used to have about two concerts a week on the saloon deck, and they were always well attended, the ladies we had on board very kindly contributing to the amusement, and I must say "Tommy" was always gallant enough to applaud their efforts whether he enjoyed the songs or not. His tastes were peculiar—sad songs seemed to appeal to him more than any others, and any song that touched on graveyards or on graves being kept green, was sure of a good reception. There was one song that had about sixteen verses to it, about "hopeless cases" the singer had met—some in jails, some in asylums, some in workhouses, and one verse ended up with a man being hanged. That was a general favourite; if the particular man who knew that song was down on the programme to sing anything else they would listen patiently till he had finished, and then they would not let him go till he had also given them the "Hopeless Cases." They never seemed to tire of it.

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One afternoon when we were lying at anchor in Table Bay waiting to go inside to embark "Invalids" for home, an Allan Line steamer arrived with the first contingent of troops from Canada.

Somehow the Canadians having volunteered for active service in South Africa and being there stirred deeper feelings than were evinced towards any other of the Colonial troops; at least, I never saw or heard of such an enthusiastic welcome being given to any of the others. It seemed to be accepted in Cape Town as a matter of course that Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania should volunteer, but that Canada, which was so far off, should do so was hardly expected.

As the Allan Liner steamed round the end of the breakwater almost every ship—and there were lots of them — hoisted signals: "Welcome," "Well done, Canada," and so on, and started their steam whistles hooting and blowing, and as the sound re-echoed from Table Mountain the din was something awful. The pier heads were crowded with cheering people, and I have no doubt (I saw it in the papers next morning) that they were regaled with patriotic speeches of welcome from the civic authorities as soon as the ship was in her berth. They were regaled, too, on something more welcome, perhaps, than the speeches—fruit, cakes, and such-like given by the Ladies' Committee of "The Tommies' Welcome to the Cape," as was everybody who arrived in the earlier days.

Next morning nothing would satisfy the inhabitants but that the troops must march through the streets so that everybody could satisfy themselves that they were real Canadians, and surely if the men needed any reward for volunteering they got it then. As they passed through the crowded, decorated streets they were cheered by the populace, white and black. For even the Kafirs became enthusiastic in honour of them, and they were not often

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moved to show enthusiasm over anybody's affairs but their own.

Two or three days later we went inside to embark our invalids, and found that amongst them were twelve lunatics, and as one of them was an officer who report said they could not handle easily at the asylum on shore, I asked that a trained attendant should be sent with him. This request the P.T.O. readily granted and a man was engaged.

When they came on board, the attendant looked more like an insane man than the officer, or my Third Officer must have thought so, because when he was talking to the officer on deck a little while before we left the dock, he pointed the attendant out to him as being out of his mind.

"Oh no," said the officer, "it is I who am the dangerous lunatic, and he's my keeper."

We had to anchor in the bay to wait for the O/C Troops to come on board, a Lieutenant in a cavalry regiment who had been severely wounded and was being sent the voyage to recuperate. We had hardly got our anchor down when Captain —, the lunatic officer, came up to me and asked me what we were waiting for. I told him for the O/C Troops.

"I wonder if he is senior to me?" he said. "Because if I am the senior I will have to be O/C Troops."

I told him I thought it was a Major who was coming, but we would soon find out when he got on board. I took the precaution of having a talk with the O/C first, so that he was prepared when Captain — tackled him on the subject, and when he did, he said to him: "Neither of us wants to be bothered with O/C's duties, we both want a rest. We'll let the Captain of the ship run the show, he knows all about it." That satisfied him. He slept for about twenty hours out of the twenty-four for the first fortnight we were at sea, and his brain recovered

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its balance, so that he was pronounced all right when we arrived at Southampton.

I think he must have been stationed on the West Coast of Africa at some time, because for the first few days after we left Cape Town he used to talk of wonderful schemes for improving that country, and said he had millions invested there in ice factories and all kinds of things. Another peculiarity of his was to write cheques for a million pounds and give them to anyone who pleased him.

We also had a curious combination on board on this trip—an Armourer Sergeant and two privates all belonging to the same regiment. One of the privates had a grudge against the Sergeant, and one night on the passage out, in some other ship, had tried to kill him when he was asleep in his hammock. For some reason or other, on that particular night, the Sergeant had changed hammocks with the other private, so that when the first private came along the latter got his throat badly cut instead of the Sergeant. The shock of escaping upset the Sergeant's brain, and we were taking the three of them home, one to serve his sentence for attempted murder, one in the hospital, doing well, and the Sergeant to go to an asylum—his was the worst case of lunacy I saw during the war, and we carried numbers of them.

We saw another side of "Tommy" now—his infinite patience under suffering and his gratitude for any little thing that was done for him. He never seemed to grumble when he was sick, so that one did not mind his doing a little of it when he got better.

A story used to be told of a Tommy at Wynberg Hospital who, when the amateur lady nurses began to call on him, was asked by one of them if he wouldn't allow her to do something for him.

"Is there nothing I can do for you, my poor man?" said the lady.

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"No, mum, thank you," said Tommy.

"Wouldn't you like me to wash your face for you?" said she.

"Well, mum," he said, in a resigned kind of voice, "if it will give you any pleasure you may, but you will be the fifteenth that's done it to-day."

He never seemed to lose his good spirits either. I remember going on board one of the hospital ships in Table Bay commanded by a chum of mine. There was a concert on deck after dinner, and every patient that could be moved was grouped round the kind of stage they had. One of the performers was a man who had had one of his legs shot off and the other more or less injured—he had to use two crutches, and even then had to steady himself against the rail of the ship while he sang, in a broad Yorkshire dialect, one of the most comical songs I have ever listened to—something about "Puffing and blowing" was the chorus. It was pathetic to watch them, all maimed as they were, enjoying the show, and joining in the chorus as if they hadn't a care in the world.

On the way home the men had more time to themselves. They had only to keep their quarters clean and attend one parade a day, and for the rest they could do practically as they liked. Sometimes the time hung a little heavily for them and they were inclined to get discontented, but we were usually lucky enough to have someone amongst themselves to keep them in a good humour. One passage in particular I remember. Fido and Dido were the names by which two of the men were known, and they certainly kept things going while they were on board. Rumour said they had been serving together in a Lancer regiment in India, and one of them had deserted and joined the Artillery—they met again in hospital somewhere in Natal, and manœuvred things so that they were both sent home in the same ship, and they were an acquisition to us. Fido was the talkative member, while Dido did the work.

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My first acquaintance with them was one day when I happened to be leaning over the rail at the forward end of the saloon deck, and I heard Fido addressing the crowd on the subject of the good time they were having. There had evidently been discontent displayed by somebody, because Fido was airing his views. He said as near as I can remember: "Speaking as a Short Service man, I've done as much transporting as any of you 'ere, and I've never struck a better ship. You gits plenty to eat and nobody bothers you from 'Reveille' to 'Lights Out,' and you can do just as you likes as long as you be'aves yourself anyway decent, and what more does any of you want?" Dido said: "'Ear, 'ear," and there was a general laugh.

They used to run gambling games in the mornings, and in the afternoons they would get up sports and give some of the money they had made in the morning back in prizes for the different events. In the evenings they held singing contests, when prizes were also given. Some of their entertainments were most original, and during the time they were on they ruled the rest of the men with a rod of iron. They wouldn't start anything until there was perfect order round them, then Fido would give the word, and whatever the particular show was would begin. "House" was too slow for them, so instead of "Who'll 'ave a card?" with them, it used to be "Who'll 'ave a stick?" and Fido's entertaining patter would be going on all the time. They had thirteen pieces of stick with numbers on them, and twelve numbers and one blank in a hat, as soon as the sticks were all sold, a number would be drawn, and whoever had the corresponding number on his stick would get a shilling and the bank would keep a penny, which in addition to their one chance of getting the lot, made it a profitable game, especially as it only took a couple of minutes to collect and re-distribute the sticks. There were always plenty of purchasers for the sticks as Fido's talk kept the crowd together.

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The singing contests were very amusing; a barrel was put on the hatch, end up, and as soon as the crowd had settled Fido would address them: "Now, men, it isn't the man as sings the best that gets the prize, so you all 'ave a chance—two of you gits up on the barrel together and stands back to back with your arms locked, and you both bursts forth into melody together—any song you likes—and whoever's chorus is taken up most by the crowd wins that 'eat. Now who'll set an example to the rest and be the first to enter?" Sometimes a contest would last two or three evenings, as there were always plenty of entries, and they were a constant source of amusement. One evening the head of the barrel gave way, which varied the entertainment, but they soon got another and a stronger one, and the contest went on until "Lights Out."

I had heard a good deal about "ragging" going on amongst the younger officers in various ships, but I only remember one occasion that anything of the kind took place on board my ship, and that ended happily.

We had several young Gunner officers going out with us one trip, and one of them displeased the others by falling in love, temporarily perhaps, with a nurse who was considerably older than himself. He may not even have been in love with her, but at any rate he used to sit by her and talk to her whenever he had the opportunity. The others chaffed him a good deal about her, but their chaff did not seem to have the desired effect, so they decided to try him by "Subaltern's Court-martial." The "Baby Gunner," as he was called, a bright youngster about seventeen years old, was elected President, and one evening he came to me on deck and asked me if I would be kind enough to be sound asleep before midnight as the Subalterns had some business on hand, and did not want to be disturbed. He made the same request of the O/C Troops—a Colonel of whom I have the most pleasant recollections, as I don't think we ever had a jollier trip

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than that particular one, and the O/C was the life and soul of the ship—and he, having an inkling of what was in the wind, said he would.

I heard afterwards that the "Prisoner" was charged with the offence of "Making love to a lady old enough to be his mother" (rather pleasant for the lady, by the way, when she came to hear of it), and was found guilty and sentenced to have the hose for washing decks played on him for five minutes to cool his ardour.

The Bosun gave them the hose, and the "President" was so pleased with the way the "Prisoner" had conducted his defence that he decided, after sentence had been pronounced, that he would take his punishment for him as it was a hot night. They all got very wet, and that was the end of it, and I don't remember whether the "Prisoner" mended his ways or not.

I was glad that one of the assistant Transport Officers at Southampton did not get his way when he wanted to have "the Old Ship" paid off in the early part of 1901, as in that case I should have missed the interesting and amusing experience of taking Australian bushmen back to their native homes. But let me first tell how I manœuvred to avoid being "Paid Off."

About this time the Admiralty were reducing the number of ships engaged in the Transport Service, and one morning as I was going on shore after my early visit to the ship, I met the Divisional Transport Officer and one of his assistants coming on board. I turned back with them even though they were kind enough to tell me that they would not trouble me to accompany them on their inspection.

I went round the ship with them and listened to their rather adverse criticisms of her, chiefly the assistant's, I noticed, with what equanimity I could command. When I heard him say: "I think, sir, we had better write to the Admiralty and recommend that she is paid off as being

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unfit for a transport," or words to that effect, I thought it time to say something. Knowing, or thinking I knew perhaps, that the Divisional Transport Officer himself was partial to "the Old Ship," I said: "I don't quite see how you can write that, sir, considering that we have sailed from here three or four times already, and the remarks on each of the 'Final Reports before Sailing' read, 'Everything most satisfactory' from the Naval point of view, 'Everything most satisfactory' from the Military, and 'Everything most satisfactory' from the Medical, and it would look kind of strange if you wrote she is unfit now."

"No ——," said the Divisional Transport Officer, "we can't very well do that, but we will write and recommend that a little more ventilation should be put in this deck," and the situation was saved and "the Old Ship" remained in the Service.

Some little time after when the same assistant Transport Officer was discussing the ship with my Purser, he said: "She would have been paid off twelve months ago if I had had my way," and the Purser answered: "I don't see why. We keep good time, have fewer deaths than nine out of ten of the other transports, and we never have any complaints." "Yes," said he, "and that's what I can't understand," and the Purser did not enlighten him.

After that he became a friend of the ship's, as did everybody who came in contact with her.

Writing of deaths reminds me of a story connected with one that took place on board while we were on our way to the Cape.

One evening after the troops had had their tea, one of them was leaning against the ship's rail smoking his pipe, when he turned round and said to someone standing near: "You might go for the doctor, I feel very bad," and with that he fell down dead.

We had several civilian surgeons on board, and one of them was in medical charge of the troops. Shortly

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after, when he had seen the man and had pronounced life extinct, I met him on deck and said: "Well, Doctor, I suppose cardiac failure will do for our Official Log Book. I have to make an entry of the death there."

"Oh, no," he said, "we must hold a post-mortem examination and find out what he really died of."

I argued the point with him for a while, telling him that we had no proper place to hold one, and that it would only make a mess and do the man no good as he was already dead. However, he insisted on it, and eventually I gave way and one of the wash-houses was got ready for the purpose.

Next morning when I met him on deck I asked him what the man had died from. In a burst of confidence he replied: "To tell you God's truth, we couldn't find out," and went into some details which I will spare my readers. When he had finished, I said: "So it will have to be cardiac failure after all," and he assented.

One doctor's story leads to another.

One voyage, when we were outward bound to the Cape, a Captain — took sick, and the R.A.M.C. Captain who was in medical charge diagnosed him to be suffering from measles and had him isolated.

We had a very young civilian surgeon on board who disagreed with the diagnosis. One morning when I met the young doctor on deck I asked him what he thought was the matter with Captain —. With a self-satisfied kind of a smirk he said: "I really don't know, but I believe in disagreeing with the other fellow, because if he turns out to be wrong in his diagnosis one gets a lot of kudos that way."

He didn't say what he would get if the other fellow turned out to be right as happened in this case. I felt sorry for any poor "Tommy" who would be unfortunate enough to have to submit himself to his tender mercies.

CHAPTER VII

THOSE AUSTRALIANS

THE Australians and New Zealanders may have been good men at the front—there is no doubt but that the earlier contingents to go to South Africa were—but on board ship, returning to their homes, they certainly were the least amenable to discipline of any of the troops we carried.

The New Zealanders and Tasmanians showed some respect for their officers, but the Australians, I am afraid, had absolutely none, or if they had they never showed it while they were on board ship. They used to boast of their utter disregard for authority, but, strangely enough, had exaggerated respect for anybody who made them do as they were told.

The following yarn which drifted into my officers' ports during the first voyage I made with them illustrates this.

When they were coming down to the coast to embark for Australia they kept firing at anything they saw moving along the line of railway, which naturally alarmed the block-houses, till "One little Railway Staff Officer," as they described him, stopped the train to lecture them. They exercised their wit on him and also threw pieces of bread at him, which naturally annoyed him. He turned the troops out that he had under his command and drove the Australians out of the trucks in which they were travelling "at the point of the bayonet" into a wire entanglement, and kept them there for twenty-four hours, then telegraphed to Lord Kitchener to know what he should do with them. The reply he received was to keep

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them on the veld until the transport was absolutely ready to sail, then to send them down to her, not allowing the train to stop at any town en route, and this was done. "He was a man," the fellow who was telling the story concluded.

Another thing that also drifted in, of which they seemed inordinately proud, was the fact that after the taking of Pretoria, when the Grand Parade of Troops took place, Lord Roberts had them marched straight through the city and encamped out on the veld some distance away. "He couldn't trust us near the public houses," was the comment of the narrator of this story.

After finishing coaling at Cape Town I received orders one fine morning to proceed to East London to embark "Bushmen" for Australia, and in due course we arrived there. They came alongside in the tenders shortly after we anchored, which showed that Lord Kitchener's orders, as narrated in the story, had been carried out.

They were a wild-looking lot, even to us who, as we thought, had become accustomed to all sorts and conditions of men.

We had been used to seeing the men embark in smart, clean khaki uniforms, but these were almost in rags. We afterwards found out the reason, which I may as well explain. The Government gave all volunteers the option of having a new suit of uniform to return home in or its equivalent in money, and the "Bushmen," almost unanimously, decided to take the money no matter how badly their clothes were worn. Their baggage, too, was different from any that we had ever carried, consisting as it did of irregularly shaped packages, which we afterwards found out mostly contained "loot" from Boer farm-houses—Dutch Bibles and tea-pots, and so on. They even brought a piano on board which they had "collared" from somewhere.

They seemed to have very little faith in each other's

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honesty, as they never left their bags out of their sight. When we had concerts on deck, as we sometimes had, they brought their bags with them and dumped them down and sat on them—even at Church service; and it was most edifying to watch them sitting on their bags of “loot” and singing “Onward, Christian Soldiers” with great fervour. The Chaplain who accompanied them fell in for a good deal of chaff from the ship’s people on this score.

I suppose there must have been too much leniency shown to them, as they were firmly convinced they could do as they liked and not have to suffer for it.

Honours were given them lavishly. One officer we had on board was honest enough to say that he did not know what he had done to earn the D.S.O. that was awarded to him. He had only taken it under pressure as he thought it must have been given to him in mistake. In the matter of Mauser rifles captured from the Boers, as mementoes of the war, they did much better than our regular army. Even our officers who desired one had to put their names down on a list and might or might not get one at the end of the war, and of course “Tommy” stood little chance of ever getting one. But the “Bushmen,” officers and men alike, seemed to have as many as they could carry, and a brisk trade was done in them at the different ports we called at while they were on board. Five pounds was about the price they got for them, so we heard (through my officers’ ports).

We had “Bushmen” from each State in the Commonwealth of Australia as well as New Zealanders on board, and it was amusing to hear the excuses, made by the Chaplain mostly, for the dirty state in which they kept the troop-decks. First it was the West Australians (we disembarked them first) who set a bad example to the rest. Then the South Australians (they left next), and so on until finally he had to acknowledge when the lot to which he was attached were the only ones left on board that

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they were as bad as the rest. The Chaplain was a very good chap and did his best with the difficult material he had to work amongst. They all liked and respected him, but even he couldn't induce them to keep their quarters clean.

The weather we experienced between East London and Australia was not conducive to much outdoor amusement. Advantage was taken of the few fine evenings we had to hold concerts and that kind of thing, but I am afraid the "Bushmen" did not take the same interest in sports and games as the ordinary "Tommy." They passed their time mostly in gambling and telling each other horrible stories of what they had done at the front, which perhaps are better forgotten.

They, probably owing to their having taken the money instead of the new rig-out offered by the Government, were troubled more or less with veld lice they brought on board with them, until they hit on a method of dodging them. One day two of them were sitting outside the Purser's office discussing the matter, and the one said to the other: "I say, Bill, do the lice keep you awake at night when you turn into your hammock?"

"They did at first," replied the other, "but now just before I want to go to sleep I whips off my shirt quick and turns it inside out and puts it on again, then before they can get through I'm asleep, and it takes more than lice to wake me then."

On one of the voyages that I carried "Bushmen," the O/C Troops did his best to keep good discipline and order, and generally he succeeded, but on one occasion he was not so successful.

It was a Sunday and arrangements had been made for the usual (with regulars) "Boat and Fire Stations" at noon. The O/C Troops and I went up on the bridge (our station). The crew were all by their stations at the boats, but there was no sign of the "Bushmen" going

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to theirs. There was a confused mass of them forward, and it transpired that a few minutes before noon two of them had commenced to fight and the rest were watching the fun. After waiting for a while I said to the O/C: "Colonel, your men seem to take more interest in the fight that is going on forward than they do in the 'Fire Stations,' and my men have something else to do, so I'll just go on with our part of it and then dismiss them."

"Give me a few more minutes," he said, "and I'll have them there."

I gave him another five minutes, and then went on with the "Fire Stations" and dismissed my men and left him to do his part or not as he liked. The fight was still going on when I went, and a few minutes later he gave it up as hopeless and left the bridge too.

He afterwards gave the officers a lecture on the subject of discipline amongst the men. They didn't understand how to secure it, though. Some of them seemed to think the best way was to give the men surreptitious drinks in order to keep them quiet, and this went on for some time without much notice being taken of it, as by then we had got to the stage of "anything for a quiet life."

It didn't work, for the more the "Bushmen" got the more they wanted, and they showed even less respect, if possible, for their officers than they had done previously—even going the length of putting their heads through the smoking-room ports, where the officers were sitting, and passing facetious remarks, such as: "Hello, there's Ant-hill Willie"—the nickname by which a rather short officer was known. It was such a quaint name that I asked how it originated, and was told that when they were out on the veld he was so short that he couldn't mount his horse without first getting it alongside an ant-hill. He was rather sensitive about the men calling him by it, but he couldn't do anything to stop them.

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Another rather funny remark I remember that was made one day was: "It's all very well asking us 'Have you any complaints?' when you're living on Benediction and quail on toast; a h—— of a lot you care."

The officer at whom this remark was fired was drinking a Benedictine at the time, and the "Bushman" added: "quail on toast," to give more point to his remark, I suppose.

When this state of things was brought to my notice by the smoke-room steward, I asked him why they didn't close the ports. He replied: "They're afraid, sir, in case the men might break them."

The giving—or selling, some said it was—of drink to the men got to such a pass that as the officers wouldn't stop it for anything the Purser said to them, I had to go to the O/C Troops and ask him to put a stop to it.

He was most indignant: "My officers wouldn't do such a thing, and I don't believe it," said he.

I assured him that it was so, and after a good deal of argument, heated on his side, he wound up the discussion by saying: "All right, Captain, as you say they are doing it I will put it in 'Orders' that no officer is either to give or sell drink to the men, and that will stop it, if such a thing is going on. But I still don't believe they would do such a thing."

His "Orders" were issued the following morning and presumably read.

During the afternoon the Purser came up to my room to tell me that he had caught one of the men coming up from an officer's room with a bottle of whisky under his coat; he had taken it from him and sent to the bar and had got the card signed by the officer.

He then went to the O/C with the card to prove that what we had said was correct, but would not show him the officer's name.

Afterwards I went to the O/C and said: "Colonel,

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your orders don't seem to have had any effect, so I must take the matter in hand myself. I have given orders that no bottles of spirits are to be issued from the bar excepting on a card bearing your or the Medical Officer's signature, and if that does not stop it I will close the bar altogether."

This had the desired effect and we had no more trouble on that score.

We had barrels of a light kind of beer put on board by the Admiralty, and the men were allowed to purchase one pint per man, per day, at a charge of a penny. We issued it under the supervision of the Officer of the Day and the Quartermaster. The men were supposed to drink it at the tub, but the O/C allowed the mess-man to draw the amount required by each mess so that they could have it with their dinner. One pint of beer was nothing for a "Bushman," so they used to play a game called "Two up" to decide which two men in each mess should get the lot drawn for that mess, so there were two "happy" men instead of a number of discontented ones—the others lived in hopes of winning next day.

We arrived at Albany in due course, and got newspapers with accounts of the landing of previous contingents there. Their carryings on had been rather alarming to the authorities. They had practically wrecked public-houses and done various other things of a like nature, and they seemed to have considered they were entitled to all the drink they could consume free of cost to themselves.

Soon after we arrived the Adjutant came to me and asked if I had seen an account in the papers of how in one ship the men had gone through the officers' cabins and stolen all their things.

I told him I hadn't, but from what I had seen of them I considered they were quite capable of it.

"I have a few things myself," he said, "that I picked up in South Africa, and I don't want to lose them. Would

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you mind taking charge of them for me till I land, as I don't suppose they will visit your cabin?"

I promised him I would, but his precautions were unnecessary after all, as the men we had on board did not proceed to such extremities as that. They had enough loot of their own, I suppose.

Owing, possibly, to the dirty state they kept the troop-decks in, there were a good many cases of measles amongst the men. Although measles is not a disease for which ships are quarantined, the authorities at Albany, evidently dreading what would happen if the men got on shore, put us under a mild kind of quarantine. The West Australians were allowed to land without any restrictions and proceed to their homes, only the sick men amongst them being sent to the Quarantine Station hospital.

After they had disembarked the rest of the men raised such a disturbance that the authorities gave in, and they were allowed on shore under promise of good conduct. But once on shore they behaved in much the same fashion as the previous arrivals had done, and there was no getting them off to the ship again, until after we had finished coaling.

As soon as the coaling was completed we left for Adelaide, and everything passed off quietly there, as the South Australians were disembarked by tender, the ship being too large to go up the river and alongside the wharf, for which we were duly thankful.

Before we sailed the O/C Troops received an invitation from the Defence Authorities at Melbourne for all the remaining "Bushmen" to attend a big luncheon on our arrival at that port. The idea was that the men should be paraded on the wharf and marched to the place where the luncheon was to take place, so as to give the people of the city an opportunity to see them.

On the way round to Melbourne there was a good deal

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of talk about the show they were going to make, and in discussing the situation with the Adjutant I suggested a guard being put on the hospital before we got alongside in case the measles patients took it in their heads to attend the function—they were mostly convalescent by this time, and in good condition for spreading infection.

He thought it a good idea and said he would see to it, and the funny thing, to my mind, was that he never even thought the guard might decide to go.

We arrived about half-past ten one morning, and before going alongside the wharf the Staff Officers came off in a tender to make final arrangements for the disembarkation.

They evidently did not feel quite easy in their minds, because the one who was responsible for its taking place in an orderly manner went to my Purser and said: "You have had more experience in disembarking troops than I have, can you give me any tips?"

"You don't want any tips," replied the Purser, laughingly, "you won't have any trouble disembarking these chaps, they'll disembark themselves."

Sure enough they did.

The side of the ship was lined with "Bushmen," their bags resting on the rail, as we were breasting her to the wharf, and as soon as we got within distance away would go the bag and the "Bushman" after it, and they were trekking up the pier as fast as their legs could carry them, and into the nearest public-house (hotels in Australia). They hadn't had a drink since leaving Albany and no doubt they were thirsty.

Some of the more decent amongst them were paraded on the wharf and marched away in charge of their officers. After they had gone, the guard, no doubt feeling lonely, went too. Then there was no one left to stop the "Measley Johnnies" (as they had got to be called by this time) going, and they went, till at last the ship was left with

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only two men on board, who were too ill to get out of their berths, and some of our kind-hearted stewards took turns at looking after them till the hospital orderlies thought fit to return to their duties. Some months after, when the ship again visited Melbourne, I was greeted by the Health Officer with the remark: "This is the ship that caused an epidemic of measles in the city some time ago."

"Not the ship," I replied, "but the undisciplined people she carried."

As there seemed to me to be very little prospect of our getting many of our diminishing numbers—we only had the New South Wales people and the Queenslanders left now—on board that day in time for us to get outside the bay before dark I fixed ten o'clock next morning for our sailing hour.

As things turned out I wished we had embarked them again the same evening and gone out to anchor and sailed next morning at daylight.

Needless to say, we did not get away at ten, and such a scene as there was on the pier before we finally did get away I hope never to see again.

"Bushmen" and firemen, accompanied by their "lady" friends whose acquaintance they had made during their short stay, all in a more or less hopeless state of intoxication, came straggling down the pier, singing and shouting as the hour for sailing drew near.

They wouldn't come on board even then, and there was no one to force them, the police being conspicuous by their absence, probably considering discretion the better part of valour.

Somebody produced a concertina and dancing was commenced, the ladies wearing the "Bushmen's" hats, the firemen those of the ladies, while the "Bushmen" had to content themselves with the firemen's "blockers" and greasy caps. Someone upset the musician and broke his

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concertina, then they lost interest and came on board still singing and shouting.

Some belated firemen came down in hansoms just as we were getting ready to sail, and each man had a sack full of bottles of beer with which no doubt they hoped to continue their orgy.

They had reckoned without the Chief Engineer, though. He had seen them coming and divining what was in the bags had provided himself with a small iron bar and was standing by the gangway to receive them. As each man stepped on board bang, bang, bang would go the bar against the bag, and any beer that escaped the Chief's tender mercies would be bumped out of the bag against the side of the house by the ship's officer who was on the gangway. The remarks of the firemen won't bear repeating.

There's a proverb that says: "There is a Providence that looks after drunken men and fools." It certainly worked out in this case as, wonderful to relate, not one of the men was hurt.

About half-past eleven we sailed away amidst the cheers of the ladies and the onlookers, and the "Bushmen" did their best to sing "Auld Lang Syne," each man in his own time, and the combined effect was most ludicrous.

Some little time after we left the wharf a rumour got about the ship that the "Bushmen" had smuggled two of their lady friends on board, and the Chaplain came up to me and asked me if I thought it would be any use searching the ship for them,

I said I didn't think so, because if they had brought any women on board with them they would have been up long before this seeking protection. Of course there weren't any, as the gangway had been closely watched by my officers all the time the ship was alongside the pier and no woman was allowed on board.

We arrived at Sydney in due course and were hurried

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alongside the wharf. The New South Wales people were hustled on shore and we left again for Brisbane in a very short time, so they had no opportunity for any of their vagaries there.

We had a comparatively peaceful time going up the coast to Brisbane, where we arrived just after high water one day. We were too late to go up the river to disembark the last of our "Bushmen," as was intended, that day, owing to the ship being of too deep a draught to cross the bar excepting at the top of high water.

The officials came down by tender to where we were lying at anchor, and paid the men off on board the ship that afternoon, and everything was settled up with regard to papers and so on to our mutual satisfaction.

Some function was arranged for the men next day in Brisbane at eleven in the morning, and as high water was not until after noon (I wouldn't go up the river at night), they sent tenders to the ship at eight o'clock to take the men up, and as soon as they had disembarked we hove up anchor and started south for Sydney to refit and clean up the ship ready for whatever might befall us after we were coaled.

The first thing we did after they had all left the ship was to fumigate the troop-decks thoroughly, so as to get rid of any germs of measles or veld lice that they might have left as a legacy to us. As a matter of fact, our Doctor was standing by with everything all ready, and as soon as the last man stepped on the gangway to the tender he said: "Now, bring along the stink-pots," which converted into ordinary language meant sulphur pans.

After the fumigation was finished we got the hose to work and had the thick of the dirt out of the ship and over the side before we entered Sydney's beautiful harbour again, glad to have the ship to ourselves for a while after all our trials.

So far as one could judge from the talk of the officers

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while they were on board, the reason of, or the excuse they made for the utter lack of discipline amongst the men was that the officers felt that the Australian authorities would not back them up if they enforced it. They all had votes, and each political party was trying to catch them. A pity, if true, as their methods spoiled good material from which to make soldiers. Report said that in one ship, where a court-martial had properly sentenced some of the ring-leaders amongst the men for a glaring instance of insubordination, on arrival in port the conviction was quashed, and the whole thing pooh-poohed as "natural exuberance of spirits returning from the war." If that was the view the authorities took, what could be expected from the officers?

The Australian people by this time had got over the first burst of enthusiasm at the return of their troops from South Africa.

At first they were looked on as "heroes" and fêted as such, but now they were beginning to be more or less of a nuisance, as they showed no disposition to return to the peaceful avocations they had given up for the excitement of "going to war," and seemed to think the feasting and drinking consequent on their return ought to be continued indefinitely.

The authorities evidently thought differently, and in a quiet way set about to get rid of some of them.

The scheme they devised was to let those who wished and had the money to pay their "Indulgence" passages (one and sixpence per day for the estimated length of passage) return to the Cape. Permission had been granted by the Admiralty for the use of returning transports for this purpose.

I can't say that I was particularly pleased on being informed by the Naval Transport Officer that my ship had to take between four and five hundred of them on our return, but was somewhat relieved when he said:

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"If you have any trouble with them you are at liberty to put into any port you like and dump them out on the beach." I replied: "Thank you, sir, that's good enough for me, and I will act on it," at which he smiled, knowing as well as I did that the authorities at any port I put into would have something to say in the matter.

However, his words would prove useful as a threat if the necessity arose—that was what was in my mind when I answered him as I did.

A date was set for our sailing, and when it was drawing near and I hadn't been informed of any arrangements for the embarkation of the returning "Bushmen," I asked the Naval Transport Officer for instructions.

He told me to see the Defence Authorities on shore and make my own arrangements with them, as he was tired of the whole business.

There seemed to have been some shilly-shallying on the part of the Commonwealth authorities, or so I gathered in the course of our conversation. They evidently wanted to get rid of the men, but didn't like to say so.

I went up to the barracks one afternoon, a few days before our departure, and was received by the Australian Colonel in charge. The interview is rather amusing to look back on even if it was a little trying at the time. I kept my temper through the whole of it, which is more than I can say for him.

"I've called, Colonel," I said, "to see what arrangements you are making for the embarkation of the men on my ship next Monday."

"None," he airily replied, "the Government are not taking any official recognition of it. The men can go if they like and that is all we have to say about it."

"That's all very well, Colonel, from your point of view, but how about mine? Who is going to collect their

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indulgence money from them? I want thirty-five [I think it was] eighteen-pences from each man before he comes on board."

"We've nothing to do with that, and are not going to do anything with regard to the collecting of money."

"Then my duty is perfectly clear, Colonel," I replied. "No gangway will be lowered from the ship till I get it, and the men may as well stay on shore."

He rather lost his temper at this and commenced to bluster. I let him finish, and then said: "The Transport Regulations distinctly state that 'all 3rd Class Indulgence money must be collected by the officer superintending the embarkation and handed to the Master before they embark,' so I am sorry but I can't let them come on board till I get it."

He replied: "You can collect it yourself when they get on board as [hesitating by this time] we are taking no official recognition of the men leaving."

I again emphasized the regulations, and pointed out that judging from my experience of "Bushmen" I would stand very little chance of collecting any money once they were on board the ship, as they would gamble it away.

He then called out to a subordinate officer, who was in the next room, to bring him their copy of the Transport Regulations.

They hadn't got one, or if they had he couldn't find it, so I quoted a little more freely, and some of my renderings of the regulations may or may not have been literally correct. They had the desired effect, however, as the Colonel, turning to the officer, said: "I'm afraid we'll have to do it ——. You had better detail someone to look after it."

That knotty point being settled he regained his temper and told me the kind of men I was to expect, and chatted over the pros and cons for some time. I finally took my

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leave on the best of good terms with him and also with myself, as I had got what I wanted.

He first of all asked me if we had any arms on board the ship—to which I replied :

“Arms! What do we want arms for? We’re used to handling people.”

“Yes,” he replied, “but these are the greatest lot of ruffians you ever carried. They are the scrapings of Hell and Newgate.”

“Well, Colonel, if it will ease your mind, we have half a dozen good revolvers on board, but I don’t expect we will find it necessary to use them.”

“That’s something,” he replied. “They won’t have any, as we will disarm them before they embark.”

On the morning of sailing I went on shore to take my leave of the Naval Transport Officer—here as everywhere else where I came in contact with them I received the most kindly consideration from the Naval authorities—and our agents.

As I came on to the Circular Quay on my return to the ship I saw the military men busily engaged in collecting the required eighteen-pences from the men before they were allowed to set foot on the tender engaged to take them off to the ship.

The scene was most amusing. One chap was four-and-sixpence short of the required amount and was trying to persuade the Embarkation Officer to let him through; but the latter was obdurate, so after listening for awhile I paid the four-and-six and the man went on board in triumph.

I didn’t stay any longer in case any more of the same kidney turned up, and I might be tempted further to deplete my pockets.

The weather had looked very threatening since early morning, with the barometer falling rapidly, and by the time the tender came alongside with the men there was

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quite a respectable gale of wind blowing, but I am glad to say the rain kept off till they had all their gear stowed away.

We had the anchor up by the time they were all on board, and after signing the necessary papers the tender left and we started on our journey.

I must say that in spite of the Colonel's remarks, previously referred to, as to disarming the men before they came on board, I was not surprised to hear revolver shots going off round the decks. They were firing at anything floating past, no doubt practising ready for the Boers, should they come across any.

The firing didn't worry me, however, as I knew there was a good friend, in the shape of a big head sea, waiting for us outside the harbour that would tame them. It did, too, and kept them tame, as it lasted for over two days, and, as a matter of fact, the bad weather we encountered delayed our arrival at Melbourne for that length of time.

I had been told before leaving Sydney that we would have about 150 men to embark at Melbourne, so I took the precaution of telegraphing instructions ahead to have all the money collected from the men before they embarked on the tender, and to have it ready to be handed to me on our arrival there.

This was done, and as we were getting near our anchorage I saw the tender with the men on board coming out to meet us, and I thought to myself they have had their hands full keeping the men together owing to our delay in arriving.

My surmise proved to be correct. When the tender was coming alongside, an officer, whom I had known for some time (an Imperial one, by the way), shouted out to me: "Thank God, you've turned up, old man. These are the worst lot I've ever had to deal with."

I replied: "All right, shove them on board and let us get away again as quickly as possible."

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Everybody seemed to be glad to get rid of them, so it didn't take long for them to embark, and we were outward bound from Melbourne again in a very short time.

Some few of the Sydney men, what with the bad weather and consequent sea-sickness, had had enough of it by this time, and after a good deal of argument with the shore people they were allowed on the tender, and that was the last we saw of them. I forget whether they got their eighteen-pences returned to them or not, but I expect they did as they were pretty keen after money, and we weren't sorry to lose them—the fewer we had on board the less chance of trouble arising.

Shortly after we left Melbourne and they had all settled down somewhat, I mustered them on the fore-deck to point out to them the conditions under which they had come on board. I told them they were not ordinary passengers and we had no stewards to look after them, so they would have to keep their own quarters clean, give assistance in getting up stores and in carrying water to the galley for the cooks; beyond that they wouldn't be troubled so long as they behaved themselves, and we would do all we could to make them happy and contented while they were on board.

After I had finished my remarks I wound up with: "Now any man who doesn't agree to do what I have laid down let him go on the other side of the deck, and I will put him ashore at Albany, where we will be calling for coal."

No one went, but the usual "Man at the back of the crowd" shouted out: "We're not under military discipline now." "No," I said, "but you're under Naval, which is a jolly sight worse."

I waited a moment or two, then as no one seemed inclined to step to the other side of the deck, I said: "That's equivalent to agreeing, and I am going to see

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you act up to it. I may as well tell you that if you give any trouble, I have instructions from the Naval Transport Officer at Sydney to put into any port I like and dump you out on to the beach, and I will do it. With regard to the getting up of food, I don't care very much whether you do it or not, because if you don't, you won't get any, so that settles itself—now you can dismiss."

The same evening my Chief Officer told me that he had heard some of the men discussing the situation (through his port), and the gist of their remarks was: "The blighter has got us till we leave Albany, but after that we'll see."

However, by the time we got to Albany they had settled down and found out that it was to their benefit to behave decently, and we had very little trouble with them during the rest of the time they were on board.

One day the men didn't take any water to the galley in the morning, and when they went for their soup at dinner-time there was none for them. The men who ought to have taken the water got such a bad time from the others that it didn't happen again.

They kept their quarters clean and we had our usual Inspection every morning, when we were always treated with respect and never had any bother after the first few days, when we had to stop to point out things that required doing and waited till they were done.

The understanding under which the "Bushmen" were granted Indulgence passages back to the Cape was that they were to join some of the Irregular corps as soon as they arrived there.

Judging from their talk during the time they were with us, I don't think the majority of the men had any intention of doing so. The idea amongst them seemed to be that things would be looking up by the time they arrived there would be no fighting to be done, and they would be able to pick up good jobs.

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Their plans, however, were upset by the action of the Military authorities at Cape Town, which was the port to which we were bound.

As soon as we anchored in the bay a number of Staff Officers came on board, and the men were compelled to fulfil their part of the understanding before they were allowed on shore. Some of them demurred and said they preferred to wait until they were landed to decide which of the Irregular corps they would join.

The disembarking Staff Officer, pointing to a vessel lying at anchor some little distance away, said: "You either enlist now or you will be taken on board that ship and sail for Australia to-morrow."

This short speech decided them; they all signed and were marched on shore under military discipline as soon as the ship was alongside the wharf, and all trouble was avoided.

Before I conclude my recollections of the "Bushmen," I may as well relate how, through a "surmise" on the part of the Purser, we escaped having to take Indulgence passengers back to the Cape on our return from the second voyage on which we had carried them.

We were lying alongside the wharf at Wellington, New Zealand, when a Staff Officer came on board and said to the Purser:

"Some of our men wish to return to South Africa and we are going to send them back with you. On what date do you expect to leave Auckland?"

Auckland was the last port in New Zealand at which we had to call before returning to Sydney for orders and to coal.

"Oh," replied the Purser, "I think we are going to Bombay to take some of the Boer prisoners back to their homes, but the *Orient* is a day or two behind us, and she will be returning to the Cape."

The authorities must have taken his "surmise" to

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mean that we had received orders to the effect that we were to go to Bombay, because when we arrived at Auckland we saw a notice in the papers in the following terms : "H.M. Transport *Britannic* will be sailing for Bombay via Sydney on —, and will take mails for India, the latest hour for posting letters being —."

We couldn't contradict it as we had received no orders regarding our movements beyond Sydney.

On the morning of sailing a Post Office cart came down to the ship with two sacks of mail duly labelled "Bombay," which we accepted and landed at Sydney, but how they got to Bombay I don't know, as we received orders to proceed to Durban on the completion of our coaling.

We went empty, and the *Orient* got the Indulgence passengers, and we hoped they enjoyed them.

One more "Bushman" story and then I have finished with my recollections of them.

Before we left East London, or Durban, or wherever it was that we started from on one of the voyages we made with them, the Imperial authorities sent on board some £30,000 in gold and silver for paying the men off on their arrival at the respective ports in Australia at which they were to disembark.

The money came on board in boxes, some larger than others, one for each contingent, and was placed in our specie room and the key handed over to the O/C Troops, as the ship had no responsibility concerning it.

The West Australians must have got their proper box, because we heard nothing further from them after they had disembarked at Albany.

When we arrived at Adelaide the O/C Troops, who disembarked there, insisted on taking the biggest box with him—presumably because he had the largest number of men—although the Purser pointed out that it was not the box intended for him.

We arrived at Melbourne in due course, and the Vic-

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torians, Tasmanians and New Zealanders who were disembarking there had chosen their boxes when a long telegram from the late O/C Troops (at Adelaide) arrived saying that he had got a box of silver instead of the box of gold that he ought to have, and he was so much short for paying his men.

On investigation it transpired that the officer in command of the Tasmanians had the O/C's gold instead of his own silver, and he very kindly squared the matter up with the South Australians, through the local banks, much to their Colonel's relief, I expect.

So far as my memory serves me it was somewhere about £5,000 that was involved.

One day, when my ship was nearly ready for sea, I went to the Principal Transport Officer's office at Cape Town to find out what was in store for us, and he said to me: "I was going to send the C.I.V.s home in your ship, but there are too many of them for you, so they will go in the *Aurania*, and you will sail the day before them with Invalids."

I was very sorry we couldn't take them, as it would have been more or less of an honour to "the Old Ship" to have carried them and to have participated in the fuss that was made over them when they arrived in England. As it was they were more or less of a "thorn in our sides" all the passage home.

We embarked our invalids (nearly all convalescents) and a number of officers, nurses and lady "Indulgence" passengers and sailed with orders to call at St. Vincent (Cape de Verde Islands) for coal. The ship that carried the C.I.V.s had similar orders and sailed the day following.

We arrived at St. Vincent some time in the late evening and received orders from the commander of the man-of-

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war stationed there, that we were to do our own coaling as the natives were "being kept fresh to coal the *Aurania*, so that she could get away quickly and arrive at Southampton in time for the C.I.V.s to take part in the festivities that had been arranged for them in London on the following Saturday."

We knew that the ship would not be able to get them there in time no matter how quickly her coaling was completed, as, according to our reckoning, she was not due at St. Vincent till next morning, so I went on board the man-of-war to see if I could persuade her Captain to let us have assistance in coaling. He was not to be persuaded, so we had to do it ourselves, and a long job it was.

Next morning, bright and early, the *Aurania* came in and anchored, and shortly afterwards someone—her Purser, I think—came alongside of us in a boat to see if we had any small stores that we could let them have, as the C.I.V.s had eaten all theirs.

We had plenty and were only too willing to oblige them, so a fatigue party from her came across to get them.

It was funny to watch the exaggerated respect with which "Tommy" welcomed them on board: "Gangway," they shouted, "gangway for the C.I.V.s," then the crowd at the top of the gangway opened out and stood at attention while the C.I.V.s walked along the decks towards our store-rooms.

There were some unkind remarks passed, too, by the "Tommies," which perhaps was excusable, when one remembered that Tommy was getting "most of the kicks and very few of the halfpence" that were knocking about in the way of "kudos."

Later on in the day I received a request from the Portuguese authorities on shore, through our Consul, for some ice, and rumours began to get about regarding festivities

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to be held in honour of the C.I.V.s, so I went on shore to see if I could find out anything.

I heard that the Governor of the Cape de Verde Islands had received a cable from H.M. the King of Portugal bidding him entertain the C.I.V.s when they called.

The free and easy translation of the cable that was current on shore amongst those who had never seen it was: "The C.I.V.s are passing through St. Vincent and they are all Dukes, so do them well."

The Governor had come up from Porto Praya, the capital of the islands, in a gun-boat, and had arranged for a grand ball in their honour at the new hospital which had just been completed, but not yet opened.

I called on our Consul, who, fortunately for us perhaps, was also the agent of the coal company that was supplying our coal, and told him that we had a number of ladies on board who were grumbling about being delayed, and didn't he think it would be a gracious act on the part of the Governor to invite them to the ball? I wound up my remarks by saying: "Besides that we've supplied the ice, so I think we are entitled to an invitation."

He laughed and left me to don his top hat and frock coat of ceremony, and then went to call on the Governor, and in a little while returned with a most cordial invitation which I took off to the ship in triumph.

About eight o'clock in the evening one of the coal company's tugs came alongside to take our party on shore to the ball. A very merry one it was, and I'm sure the ladies we took were a welcome addition, as partners were none too plentiful.

The ball was a great success and was one of the funniest functions it has ever been my good fortune to attend. We were received in due form and presented by two most gorgeous officials with a glass of champagne with which to drink the King of Portugal's good health. I need

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hardly say that this was a most popular ceremony and increased in popularity as the evening progressed, as the two officials never seemed to tire, nor the supply of champagne to run short.

The light refreshments, which were handed round during the evening by two men in the most brilliant livery I have ever seen, consisted of a huge turkey cut up in little bits (handy for picking up with one's fingers) and a kind of croquette with a wooden tooth-pick rove through it, for ease of manipulation. These were followed round by a pack of dogs, and many were the fights over the pieces that fell on the floor, so that even those who didn't dance found amusement in watching them.

About one o'clock in the morning we hunted up our tug and returned to the ship well pleased with our entertainment, and stories of "The Ball" helped to pass the time for the rest of the voyage.

One I remember related how a young cavalry officer we had on board had danced several dances with a charming Portuguese lady, and though neither of them could speak a word the other could understand they had got on very well together. In telling the story he said he took her in to supper, and "as a mark of her affection she took one of the croquettes, and after biting off half of it she handed the rest to me with the tooth-pick still firmly embedded in it. I dropped it on the floor and one of the dogs yaffled it, and then she was offended and wouldn't play with me any more."

The *Aurania* finished coaling before us and sailed about five o'clock next morning. We left a few hours later.

On our arrival at Southampton on the Sunday morning we found, as we expected, the *Aurania* anchored off Netley with the C.I.V.s still on board—their reception in London having been put off till the Monday owing to their late arrival.

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We steamed past them, never doubting for a moment but that we would disembark right away as was usual, Sunday or any other day, and many were the facetious remarks shouted out by our "Tommies" as we passed close to them.

However, when we got nearly up to the dock a tug came off with orders for us to go to an anchor and come up after the *Aurania* on Monday morning to disembark.

There was nothing for us to do then but turn and go past the *Aurania* again, as there was no room to anchor above her. This was the C.I.V.s' opportunity and they took good advantage of it. As we approached they lined the ship's side, fore and aft, and as we drew abreast they burst into a roar of laughter.

If they had only spoken, "Tommy" would have been able to answer, but the laughter was too much for him, so far as we were concerned we passed in dead silence.

We anchored far enough away so that the lustiest voice amongst the "Tommies" couldn't carry to the *Aurania* when they recovered from their astonishment, and next morning both ships had other things to think of than exchanging witticisms.

CHAPTER VIII

ENTR'ACTE

AFTER the South African War was over and the victorious troops had returned to their native land, the *Britannic* was paid off by the Admiralty. We took her back to her builders at Belfast to repose there until she was finally sold to the Italians for breaking-up purposes. The end of a glorious career. She was one of the most wonderful ships that had ever been built, as after twenty-eight years' hard running she kept up her original speed, with her original engines and boilers still in good working order.

I was at a loose end after that and took advantage of it to work off my arrears of drill in the Naval Reserve.

One dark, rainy afternoon when drill had ceased for the day on the *Eagle*, I was walking up town when I met Captain Hewitt, who asked me why I was not on board my ship taking her out of dry-dock or putting her in—I forget which.

I replied that I wasn't aware that I had a ship, and he said, "Haven't they told you in the office? You are going in the *Suevic*."

I then said, "How about the *Ionic*, sir? She is a better ship, and I am senior to Captain Ranson."

He snapped, "Don't say that in the office or you may be sent in her and she won't be back in time."

"A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse," and from that I gathered that I was destined to command the *Arabic* when she was completed at Harland & Wolff's yard at Belfast.

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In due course I was appointed to the *Suevic* in our Australian service, and made one voyage in her and had the pleasure of meeting again my friends in the various ports at which we called.

She carried only one class of passengers. They were really Third Class, but very nice people—as well as some who were not—travelled in her. That sometimes made things a little difficult.

A Sports Committee was elected from which the rougher element was excluded, and very often they would complain that they were not allowed the use of the games, as the committee had arranged some tournament or other. However, by the use of a little tact we generally kept things running smoothly and everybody enjoyed themselves.

On the passage home we had three clergymen amongst the passengers, one of them being a Canon of Sydney Cathedral. He came to me shortly after we had sailed to ask what arrangements were made for religious services on board.

I told him that the usual service was held every Sunday at 10.30 A.M., and asked him to make the necessary arrangements, but stipulated that the service was not to last more than forty minutes and that nothing was to be said to offend the other passengers, “as after all, Canon, we have only contracted to take them as far as London, and are not responsible for where they eventually reach.”

He agreed, and a very gentle old clergyman officiated on the first Sunday out and gave a short address which everybody appeared to enjoy. The Canon read the lessons, and as I was coming away he asked me if the service had met with my approval. I passed some complimentary remarks and went on to fix up the noon position of the ship.

The next Sunday the Canon took the service himself and all went well.

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Before the next Sunday came round the Sports Committee had got to work. A collection had been taken up for prizes, and various sports were arranged to take place during the following week.

Sunday came, and the other clergyman, who was of the tub-thumping variety, preached the sermon. He went for the rest of the passengers tooth and nail, accusing them of gambling and other sorts of sin, and said that he had been grieved to notice that on the previous Sundays after the service was over the first place they made for was the bar. He wound up his discourse with a tirade against the athletic sports, and said: "There isn't one of you would have gone in for them if it hadn't been for the money prizes attached to them. Let me tell you the devil holds the stakes." He reiterated this accusation several times, waxing hotter and hotter and thumping the table in front of him more vigorously each time he said it.

During the service I had been watching the congregation rather anxiously, wondering how they would take their wiggling, but did not interfere with the reverend gentleman's eloquence, as I saw they were taking it good-naturedly and appeared amused by it rather than otherwise.

Afterwards I sent my compliments to the Canon and asked him if he would be good enough to meet me in the Purser's office.

When he came I told him that I could not allow the gentleman who officiated in the morning to preach again, and was proceeding to tell him that if he couldn't make arrangements without his assistance I would have to put the Purser up, "and he is a Roman Catholic," when he took the wind out of my sails by saying, "I got it worse than anybody else."

"How was that?" I asked him, and he replied, "I am the chairman of the Sports Committee and I hold the stakes."

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Of course we all laughed, but I continued : "Seriously, Canon, I cannot be responsible for what the passengers may do if he says such things again." He promised that he shouldn't, and with that the interview ended.

During my experience at sea I have always found that clergymen are less amenable to the discipline of the ship than any other class of passengers. I suppose it must be because they become accustomed in the exercise of their calling to telling other people what they ought to do without being answered back, and resent restrictions being placed on them in consequence.

When three weeks had elapsed, and in the ordinary course it would have been the tub-thumping gentleman's turn to preach, I took an opportunity of asking the Canon who was going to officiate.

"It is Mr. So-and-So's Sunday," he said, and I answered, "Yes, but you remember the arrangement we came to about him?" "Yes," he said, "but, to tell you the truth, I don't like telling him as I have no jurisdiction over him."

"If that is all that is troubling you, Canon, I'll do it myself," and I sent a polite message asking him to come to my room. I told him, gently but firmly, that after listening to his last sermon I couldn't allow him to preach again.

He bowed to my authority, but added : "If I had been allowed I would have said exactly the same kind of thing, as I have not seen the slightest sign of improvement in their conduct."

We had two or three stowaways, I remember, and when a fancy dress ball was being arranged a request was sent to me for one of them to play the piano at the dance.

On the evening it was held I went along the deck to see the "Grand March" with which it opened, and noticed a man in full evening dress playing the piano.

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The Purser was standing next to me, so I asked where the stowaway was, and he replied: "That is he playing the piano."

On making further inquiries next day I found out that he had been assistant organist of Sydney Cathedral, and that in addition to stowing himself away he had brought his full kit of clothes with him.

I don't think that the shovelling of coal he was then put to would improve his touch on the organ when he got another opportunity of playing.

When I arrived home in the *Suevic* I was appointed to the *Arabic*, and was sent to Belfast to bring her over to Liverpool. I remained in her for about two years.

She was torpedoed off the south coast of Ireland during the war, and my friend Captain Finch, who was then in command of her, had a curious experience in being rescued from a watery grave.

He was on the bridge at the end, and practically stepped off it as she sank, and in relating his experiences to me afterwards he said: "I went down and down and swallowed about half the Atlantic, and I thought it was 'Good-bye, William,' but on opening my eyes I saw it was lighter, so kicked out and soon came to the surface."

He came up close to one of the life rafts, and after assisting a lady with her baby, a male passenger and two of the firemen on to it, the two firemen tried to pull him on too, and he was no light weight.

"I had to laugh at their efforts," he told me, as they would miss the proper moment when he said, "Now pull," and as a result would have been pulled in again themselves by his weight if they hadn't let go.

Eventually a wave rolled him on to the raft, and later they were taken off by a patrol boat.

He told me also a strange accident regarding his servant. The last that was seen of him he was grasping the rail of the ship with both hands and staring into the sea,

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apparently paralysed by fear. Finch shouted to him from the bridge to jump overboard, and he was hailed from a boat fairly close to and told they would pick him up if he jumped. He was still in the same position when the rail went under.

After the *Arabic* I spent five happy years in command of the first *Majestic*, and one day had the good fortune to rescue the crew of the Norwegian tanker *Helios* from a very awkward situation.

It was blowing fairly fresh and there was a good-sized sea on when we sighted her flying signals of distress. We bore down on her and stopped a little to leeward of her.

She lowered a boat, which came alongside with about half her crew in it who told us that their other boats had been disabled, so a boat's crew from my ship in charge of the Fourth Officer, Mr. Walker, went back for the remainder. Before he left I told Mr. Walker to remind the Captain of the *Helios* to open the sea-cocks before leaving the ship so that she wouldn't long remain a menace to navigation.

When they were all safely on board we proceeded on our way to Southampton. The Captain of the *Helios* came up on the bridge, and after welcoming him I waited for him to speak, thinking he would say, "Thank God to be out of that," or words to that effect. Instead, he stood with his hands on the bridge rail looking at his ship for quite an appreciable length of time, and then blurted out, "I wish I had had a thousand on her myself," which went to show that his thoughts were running on money matters rather than on his escape.

I laughed, and touching him on the shoulder said, "Perhaps it is as well you haven't or you might be asked more awkward questions by the insurance people than you will be now."

After his crew had been made comfortable he drew

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up a statement as to the reasons for the abandonment, and made all of them sign it. In it he stated that he had opened the sea-cocks by my orders, so I asked him why he had put that in, as his own common sense ought to have prompted him to do it.

A pleasing ceremony took place some time later at Southampton when a very beautiful silver cup was presented to me, and medals to the boat's crew by the Norwegian Government as a memento of the rescue.

A condition attached to wireless messages sent from the ship by passengers is that they are subject to censorship.

One fine morning when we were about five or six hundred miles from New York we had a slight accident to one of the engines which caused a considerable amount of steam to escape. This found its way up the engine-room skylight.

Shortly after it happened the wireless operator brought a message to me reading, "Boilers burst, nine men killed, don't know when we will arrive," signed by a passenger. Should he send it?

I sent for the passenger in question and told him his message could not be sent. He was one of the aggressive kind, and asked: "Why not?" "For three reasons," I said. He asked what they were, so I said: "The first is that the boilers have not burst, the second is that nobody has been killed, and the third that we do know when we will arrive." After some argument he finally agreed that his message was a little exaggerated and altered it to read: "Delayed, due dock such a time."

The regulation of the White Star Line regarding the conducting of Divine Service on Sunday reads that "the Commander shall conduct it when his other duties permit." Mine never did, as a matter of fact, but I know of cases in other ships where they did. One commander was

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hauled over the coals by the managers for reading the Absolution one Sunday when some ladies of his congregation complained about his doing so.

I heard of another occasion when the first lesson was taken from that chapter in the Book of Genesis where it states that "Abraham begat Isaac and Isaac begat Jacob"; the commander got that far, turned over the page and glanced down it, and then continued, "and they kept on begatting till the end of the chapter. Here endeth the First Lesson."

Which reminds me that on the passage out to New York one voyage in the *Majestic* after we had been a few days at sea, it was reported to me that there was a couple of Norwegians in the 3rd Class who, judging from the appearance of the lady, ought to have been married some months previously and that they were still single.

We knew that she wouldn't be allowed to enter the United States in that condition unless she was married, so they were sent for, the position explained to them, and they were asked if they would go through the ceremony on board, providing it could be arranged.

They were delighted with the suggestion, as their intention had been to get married as soon as they landed.

The problem then was to find a parson willing to perform the ceremony, as the privilege of marrying people at sea had been taken away from the Master of a ship some time or other, though there still remained in the Official Log Book a page for the recording of any marriages that might take place, with a column headed: "Officiating Clergyman," for him to sign.

There were no clergymen amongst the passengers that we knew of, but we eventually found a passenger in the 2nd Class who said he was one, though he was wearing civilian clothes. He offered to officiate.

The hour was fixed for 11 A.M. in the Purser's office, and as we wanted to give them as good a "send-off" as

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OFFICIAL LOG of the
from LIVERPOOL

MAJESTIC
towards

NEW YORK

Date of the Occurrence entered with Hour.	Place of the Occurrence, or situation by Latitude and Longitude at Sea.	Date of Entry.	Entries required by Act of Parliament.	Amount of Fine or Forfeiture incurred.
11.30 AM 22 Oct 06	Lat 44° 45' N Long 53° 34' W	22/10/06	<p>Marriage has been solemnized between two third class passengers Walfrit Larsson, and Elizabeth Wickstrand, both Swedes, last residing at Broten, Westra Imterrik, Norrland, Sweden.</p> <p>Signatures of } Walfrit Larsson contracting parties } Elizabeth Larsson</p> <p>Officiating Clergyman R C Williams</p> <p>Master, Robertson T. Haynes</p> <p>Driver, H W M. Chory</p> <p>Witnesses.</p> <p>W A. Clark U. States Auditor for Minnesota</p> <p>J S Hargreaves. Justice of the Peace & J. L. for County, Westchester, England</p> <p>Arthur T. Hargreaves Surgeon.</p>	

NOTE.—Every entry in this Log Book required by the Act must be signed by the Master and by the Mate or some other of the Crew, and every entry of illness, injury or death must also be signed by the Surgeon or Medical Practitioner on board (if any); and every entry of wages due to, or of the sale of the contents of, any Seaman or Apprentice who has died must be signed by the Master and by the Mate and some other member of the Crew, and every entry of wages due to any Seaman who enters His Majesty's Service must be signed by the Master and by the Seaman, or by the Officer authorized to receive the Seaman into such Service.

NOTE.—Reading over Entries of Offences.—The Master's especial attention is called to Section 238 (b) (c) and (d) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, which will be found in Notice I. prefixed to this Log.

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possible, Mr. J. E. Hargreaves, Deputy Lieutenant of the County of Westmorland, and—what was more important to us—one of our oldest travellers, and Senator Clarke, of Montana, were asked to attend as witnesses.

The ceremony was duly performed with everyone, including the bride and groom, on the broad grin, as it had to be done through our interpreter. Mr. Hargreaves “set up” a bottle of port with which to drink the health of the married couple—but I don’t remember that anyone kissed the bride!

A photograph of the wedding party was taken afterwards on the saloon deck by the doctor of the ship with my camera, and when I came to look for the film later I found he had abstracted it and sold it to some newspaper.

The 1st Class passengers made a collection, amounting to about twenty dollars—one of which was given by Senator Clarke—for a wedding present.

On arrival at New York the happy pair were accepted by the Immigration authorities on our explaining what had happened and being shown the entry in our Official Log concerning the matter. They were told to call at the British Consulate for their marriage certificate after they had been passed through Ellis Island, which I afterwards heard they did.

The photograph appeared in the Press the morning after we arrived, together with a long account of the ceremony, in which it was stated that Senator Clarke had given the happy pair a wedding breakfast in the saloon and had also given them a very handsome wedding present. Where they got their information from I don’t know, but I have often found that the New York Press can make a good story out of very little information.

Some time after, when Sir Courtenay Bennett, our Consul-General at New York at that time, was a passenger with me, I told the story at table one night at dinner, and he said that the marriage was not a legal one. I said:

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"I don't know whether it was legal or not, but your office gave them a certificate." "No," he replied, "all we gave them was a certified copy of the entry in your log."

"Well, it satisfied them, and the Immigration people, and that was all we cared about," I answered.

When the White Star Line inaugurated their Canadian service in April, 1909, I was transferred from the *Majestic* to the *Laurentic* to have the honour of opening it.

The Canadian trade has always had the reputation of being more difficult than that of New York on account of the prevalence of ice and fog on that route and the long stretch of river between Quebec and Montreal that we had to negotiate, and I must acknowledge that I found it didn't belie its reputation.

In the New York service all danger of encountering icebergs can be eliminated by going farther south when they are about, as is now done, but in the Canadian trade the ships have to cross that part of the Atlantic Ocean where they are ordinarily seen.

The *Laurentic* was an experiment so far as our company was concerned, with a new combination of engines—two triple expansion engines, the fourth expansion of the steam being used to drive a low pressure centre turbine. It proved a great success, and was adopted for the *Olympic* and other large steamers in our service.

On sailing day a number of our officials as well as some from Harland & Wolff's, her builders, were embarked, to make the maiden voyage, together with a goodly number of passengers. Amongst the officials were Captain Murray, our Marine Superintendent, who had had previous experience in the Canadian trade before joining us, and Captain Harry Smith, who was to command her sister ship when she came out, to gain experience of the trade.

I remember Mr. Ismay saying to me just before we left the landing-stage: "I hope I haven't sent too much

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talent with you," and my reply: "Well, sir, there is one thing you can be sure of, and that is if their advice doesn't coincide with my judgment it won't be acted on."

The voyage was a success in every way, and there was quite a fuss made over the largest steamer that had ever gone up the St. Lawrence when we arrived at Montreal.

The luncheon that was given on board, I remember, lasted from a quarter to one to half-past five; they all had so much to say.

Our local manager, who took the chair, had told me that there might be "a few orations," so I said to him: "Well, you need not say much; all you will have to do will be to welcome the guests." However, he took half an hour or so doing that and telling them how Montreal had grown since he first settled there.

Then the Minister of Marine took about three-quarters of an hour or thereabouts telling about the improvements that had been made in the St. Lawrence by dredging and lighting during the tenure of the Administration of which he had the honour of being a member, and what improvements they were going to make in the future.

After him the Minister of Agriculture rose and told us how many bushels of grain and other produce had left the port of Montreal during the same period, or perhaps during a lengthier one, and took about an hour doing it.

After him one of the Harbour Commissioners had his innings and told us all about the harbour, docks and grain elevators that they had in Montreal. During his speech—he was a Colonel in the Militia, I think it was—he mixed up the Minister of Marine and the Minister of Defence in some statement he made, which caused a certain amount of amusement. It took him a long time to say all he had to say, too.

Then one of the leading merchants got up and made a very short complimentary speech in proposing my health.

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After thanking him on behalf of myself and my people, all I said was: "Well, gentlemen, I thought this lunch was arranged to celebrate the arrival of the largest ship that had ever come up to Montreal, and so far I haven't heard her name mentioned, and I am afraid it is too late now to tell you of her good qualities, so if you will all take passages in her we will do our best to take care of you." And that broke up the meeting.

It was a pleasure, though, to find everybody so enthusiastic in their praise of Canada and her premier port that they couldn't think of anything else to say or didn't think it necessary to say it.

When Dr. Crippen and Miss Ethel le Neve, after the doctor had murdered his wife, were discovered on board the *Montrose* some time after she had got to sea and a wireless message from the ship had reached Scotland Yard acquainting them with the fact, Inspector Dew was sent out with us as a passenger to arrest them on their arrival in Canada.

The *Laurentic* being a much faster ship she was practically certain to arrive at Father Point before the *Montrose*.

As soon as we got into wireless communication with the Canadian side I was inundated with messages from all sorts of newspapers—British, Canadian and American—asking me to send so many words at their expense detailing all I knew of Crippen and Ethel le Neve. As I knew nothing that was not already known by everybody interested when I sailed from Liverpool I paid no attention to their requests.

We had had fog making the Straits of Belle Isle, and I had been on deck for a considerable length of time, so was quite ready for a good sleep when the fog cleared after we had passed through the Straits and there was a clear stretch of water in front of us that would take us some time to traverse.

I had hardly got to sleep when they awoke me with

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another message asking for the same information, this time from a famous London daily. I made up my mind there and then that I would make them pay for disturbing me, so dictated a reply to the following effect: "Know nothing of either Crippen or Ethel le Neve, and care less," signed it, and in due course it was sent. It showed how little I knew about news-gathering in those days, as I found on my return home that the paper had made a story out of those few words that answered their purpose just as well as if I had sent them real information.

Our managers raised the question as to whether it was wise for me to give information to the Press without sending the message through them. I replied that I had not given any information, my only intention in sending the message being to make them pay for waking me up.

A funny incident occurred while I was in the *Laurentic*, which I dare say is unique in the annals of the Merchant Service. The ship was stopped owing to a dog whining on board.

One night we were passing Point Amour, at the western end of the Straits of Belle Isle, at reduced speed owing to fog, and could hear the fog signal blowing regularly, when we heard what we all thought was the sound of a sailing vessel's horn on our port side. We heard the fog signal again, then the supposed horn which sounded closer to and nearer ahead, so I went full speed astern to get the way off the ship. Point Amour sounded, and then the same noise again, and I said: "Half-speed ahead—it is that damned dog."

We had a dog, belonging to some passenger on board, under the forecastle head who was noted for making noises, but I never heard him make such a weird one as he made that night in answer to Amour Point.

My belief in the theory of suction between passing ships which is so often advanced in collision cases—notably in that between the *Olympic* and *Hawke* in the Solent—

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to account for the two ships coming together received a shock while I was in the Canadian trade.

We were proceeding up the St. Lawrence and had entered the Cap-à-la-Roche Channel when we saw a large steamer entering it at the other end on her way down the river.

The Channel at the place we met was at that time 300 feet wide, and the tide was running diagonally across it at about a mile and a half an hour.

The two ships took up about 110 feet or more between them, and of necessity there had to be a certain amount of space on each side of the Channel and a bit in the middle.

If there is anything in the suction theory one would think it had a good opportunity to prove itself on that occasion, yet we passed each other in perfect safety.

It was a comfort to think, though, that if we had holed each other badly we hadn't far to sink, as there would only be about two feet of water under us, so nobody would have got wet.

Speaking of the suction theory reminds me of a case that occurred later in my career when it was sought at New York to make it work the other way, or, I should say, to prove that it did.

We were coming down New York River and had just passed a steamer going the same way off the statue of Liberty when we had to ease down on passing some coal lighters in tow in order to avoid their doing damage to each other through the action of our wash.

Something must have gone wrong on the steamer we had passed—possibly her steering-gear jammed—as when she was approaching the tow she took a sheer towards it, and though she let go both her anchors she succeeded in sinking two of the lighters.

The steamer herself was undamaged and proceeded to sea, and the probability was that she might never return as she was only a casual caller at that port.

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The owners of the barges threatened to bring an action against us for damages, stating that we were the primary cause of the collision, as the suction caused by us when we were passing the steamer (they couldn't get hold of) had made her sheer into their barges.

When our managers showed me the letter they had received from the lawyers, I said: "They can't have it both ways. It has already been proved in the *Olympic-Hawke* case, which was taken up to the House of Lords, that a ship's suction causes others to sheer into her, so they will have difficulty in proving otherwise."

I never heard any more about the case, so presume it was dropped.

CHAPTER IX

PASSENGERS WISE AND OTHERWISE

IT is extraordinary to me how a certain class of passengers when they engage their passage pay the minimum rate for it, and when they come on board the ship expect to find the best accommodation made ready for them. Diplomats are the most optimistic in this respect, and they are not confined to any one nation.

Of course, when the ship is not full the managers are only too glad to oblige such influential passengers, but I don't think they have any just cause for complaint when they don't get what they consider their position entitles them to; some of them do complain, however, and make a fuss.

An amusing incident of this kind happened when I was in the first *Majestic*, and the situation was saved by my tactful Purser.

The gentleman's card was inscribed "Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of —," so his standing and importance were unquestionable and he was fully aware of it.

On embarking at Liverpool he found he was berthed "below decks," as he called it, and that the best rooms were all occupied by "Drummers, sir."

He kicked up a row with our Passenger Manager who was in charge of the berthing of passengers. The latter explained to him that the ship was full and that it was impossible to improve his accommodation. He said: "Then move some of the drummers, sir; I'm not accustomed to travelling below decks."

To placate him the manager said that when the ship

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got away from the landing-stage it might be possible that some passenger had not turned up, and, if that happened, he would give instructions for him to be moved into the vacant berth.

But alas, nobody failed to turn up, and it was explained to him that nothing could be done.

To impress his importance on the Purser, he said, "I usually travel in cruisers, sir," and McElroy replied: "And very uncomfortable ships they are, sir."

This broke the ice, as it were, and after further conversation he was promised a seat in the dining-saloon next to a very charming actress who happened to be a passenger and in whom he appeared to be specially interested. She very kindly fell in with the arrangement. The table at which they were seated happened to be mine, and as the rest of the company were congenial we had a very jolly time. He was kind enough, indeed, to say before he left that he had never had a more enjoyable trip.

"Not even in a cruiser?" I couldn't resist saying. He laughed, and all ended happily.

This reminds me of another story that happened in the same ship, and in which the same Purser was concerned.

Another of our steamers had been chartered for a Mediterranean cruise by an American tourist agency. The cruise was disbanded on the steamer's arrival at Liverpool and a number of the cruisers were returning to New York with us. The charterer came on board while we were embarking our passengers at the stage and went to the Purser's office.

"You don't know me, Mr. Purser—I don't know you," he announced. "My name is ——. You have some of my cruisers on board, and they will all come to you and say I promised them all sorts of things. Well, I haven't promised a damned one of them anything, so don't give them anything, and, what's more, I don't care if I never see anything of any of them again. There are sixty-four

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million people in the United States, and if I can't get eight hundred suckers out of that number every year I don't know my business."

Of course, everything was done, in spite of his remarks, to make them as comfortable as possible while they were with us, as steamship owners are not in the happy position of being able to treat prospective passengers in the same airy manner that he evidently considered he could.

I was transferred from the *Laurentic* to the *Adriatic* when the *Olympic*—the finest ship, in my estimation, that has ever been built or ever will be—came out in May, 1911.

During the winters of 1912 and 1913 the *Adriatic* was engaged in the Mediterranean trade from New York, making three round trips each year.

They were not regular cruises in the sense that the same people remained in the ship for the round voyage, but arrangements were made at every port we called at for excursions on shore, so that the passengers could see as much as was possible during the limited time we stayed at them.

At some of the ports, such as Madeira, the supply of launches for taking the people to and fro was not sufficiently adequate, but this, of course, was not our fault. As everybody seemed to want to go on shore in the first launch a certain amount of discontent arose, which, on one occasion, was being voiced by the President of one of the leading American railway companies. Unreasonably, I thought; so I went down from the bridge to where he was holding forth to the other passengers to see if I could "pour oil on the troubled waters." He went for me as soon as I made my appearance, and said that the White Star Line ought to have built a wharf for the ship to go alongside to land the people in comfort. He would have done it if it had been his business. All kinds of wild statements of that kind he made, and really was very angry.

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I reminded him mildly that we were in a country that was foreign to both of us, and that we had to abide by their regulations. Everything was being done that was possible for their convenience and comfort. He retaliated that they did things much better in the German ships and he would travel in them in the future.

"Yes," I replied, "there is one of them lying at anchor there waiting to land their passengers after ours are on shore."

This seemed to satisfy the rest of the passengers who were standing round listening, and he walked away, so I thought he must be satisfied too.

On one of our voyages to the Mediterranean I saw the most beautiful sight I think I have ever seen. We were approaching the anchorage off Monaco one morning as daylight was coming in. The sun rose right out of the sea and every window in Monte Carlo facing became a deep crimson for a few moments. This, with the white houses and the snow on the mountains in the background made an effect that was simply indescribable. And only one of our passengers was on deck to see it! Even the sailors, and they are not an emotional class, ceased work to look at it for the few minutes it lasted.

One night as we were leaving Monaco for Genoa about midnight a First-class passenger tried to jump overboard from the boat deck. He and his wife had spent the day at Monte Carlo and had lost all their money at the gaming tables. They both returned on board in a more or less hysterical condition, and the noise they made on the boat deck attracted the attention of one of our petty officers, who luckily reached them in time to prevent his death. The Doctor was called to the scene, and after a while they quietened down and went below. A watch was set outside their door for the night, but nothing untoward happened, and next day they disembarked at Genoa.

The late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan made his last voyage

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to sea with me in the *Adriatic*. We left our pier at New York at one o'clock one day in misty weather. After we had passed the Battery, dense fog set in and we decided to anchor. The tide was ebbing, and after giving the ship a sheer to the westward, we let go the anchor. Unfortunately, however, it didn't hold, and her heel caught on the mud flats as she was swinging to the tide. We eventually brought up with our broadside resting against the bank.

The passengers all thought we were at anchor in the usual way. There was no need to inform them otherwise. There was no danger. I didn't even consider it necessary to send word on shore by wireless regarding the predicament we were in, as I felt sure the fog would last only until the tide turned, and we would then swing clear of the bank. A short time later, however, a tug that was passing in the fog heard our bell and came alongside to inquire if we needed any assistance. I told him we didn't, but asked him to take a letter on shore to our office. He did, and later on our Marine Superintendent came off to us in another tug. The first question he put to me was: "Have you told Mr. Morgan?"

I answered that I had not told anybody, as they were all under the impression that we had merely anchored on account of the fog.

He seemed to think that Mr. Morgan ought to be informed, so I sent my servant to his room to ask him when it would suit his convenience to receive me. "Right away," he said.

He was at his usual occupation when on board a ship, playing solitaire, with one of his sisters sitting by knitting, I remember. He offered me one of his famous cigars and, after I had explained the situation to him, he asked me why I had left the dock, adding: "I could have done with another hour or so on shore."

I told him that the weather was clear enough then,

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and went on, "Besides that, sir, we have about eight hundred passengers on board, and each passenger would have about five or six friends to see them off. Those on shore would be wishing the ship away so that they could go home for their lunch, and those on board would be wishing that their friends would leave so that they could get settled down for the trip."

He laughed and said: "There's something in that." After a few minutes' further conversation regarding the prospects I left him, and sure enough when the tide turned we swung clear of the bank and the weather cleared sufficiently for us to get to sea.

He went all the way to Alexandria with us, and we were all very sorry to hear some time later that he had been taken seriously ill in Egypt.

Some six or seven weeks after, when we returned to Alexandria on our next voyage, he had recovered sufficiently to allow him to return to Naples with us.

When he embarked I received him at the gangway.

"Well, I'm not dead yet," he laughed, "and I hope to make many more voyages with you."

I noticed a very great change in him, however, from when he had landed, and it was a shock to see such a great, strong, big-hearted man as he had been evidently failing.

His doctors would only allow him to smoke a very few cigarettes a day, and we had always been accustomed to seeing him and his big cigar inseparable.

On our arrival at Naples, after saying good-bye to everybody he knew on board, he walked down the gangway to the special train that was in waiting to take him to Rome, and I was glad somehow to see that he had his big cigar in his mouth, even if it was not lighted.

The whole world, I think, watched anxiously for his recovery, but, as everybody knows, he died later on in Rome.

In the early days of the *Britannic* there was great

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rivalry between Mr. Morgan and Mr. Wm. H. Vanderbilt as to which of them should have certain rooms on her. Their dates for crossing the Atlantic very often clashed, so to settle the matter for a certain number of years at any rate, Mr. Vanderbilt, when he was in our New York office taking his passage, engaged the rooms in question for five years in advance, but, alas! he did not live to occupy them, as when the next year came round he was dead.

In his later years Mr. Morgan had the rooms he liked reserved for several dates in various ships, till he could settle when he wished to cross. He was always, it seems to me, associated with the White Star Line. I remember him crossing with us when I was Fourth Officer of the *Teutonic*, and at intervals in various other ships till his death. His son, too, the present Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, and his family, have often been passengers with me.

One day not very long ago when we were talking over old times, I ventured to congratulate him on his children—when they were young—being the best-behaved children I had ever seen on board a ship. He smiled and told me that when they first came on board he made a rule that the first one of them who was caught with both feet off the deck at once would be sent to bed. “I only had to punish them once,” he said. A very good rule, too, as children play all sorts of pranks at sea. I remember on one trip six of them were found by the saloon deckman standing on one of the lower rails at the side of the ship playing a game they called “seeing who could lean over furthest.” They were very indignant when he shepherded them along to their mothers.

Not only the Morgan family but many other prominent people from both sides of the Atlantic have often told me that they feel more at home on our ships than on any others, as everybody on board always appears so anxious and willing to do everything possible for their comfort and

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convenience—a tribute of which I am sure any steamship company might well be proud.

Early in 1913, February, I think it was, the *Kaiserin Augusta Victoria*, of the Hamburg-American Line, now the *Empress of Scotland*, in the Canadian Pacific Line, sailed on the same day that we did from New York, also bound for the Mediterranean, with Captain Ruser in command. We kept almost alongside each other for several days till we parted company, she to go to the Azores for her first port of call and we to Madeira.

When we were two or three days out from New York my passengers expressed a wish to send a friendly message to her by wireless, and sent one up for my approval something to the following effect: "It is pleasant to see two fine ships steaming together in friendly rivalry. Long may the two countries continue to do so." This was sent. In due course we received a reply couched in similar terms, signed "Ruser."

After war had been declared the pilot who took the *Vaterland* into New York with Captain Ruser in command, told me that when he and his officers heard the news they were very much distressed, and as a mark of their disapproval had slashed to pieces the large oil painting of the Kaiser that was hanging in her smoke-room. Which seems to prove that one German ship's company at any rate was not in favour of the war.

CHAPTER X

WAR

WHEN war was declared the *Adriatic* was in New York, and I was spending the week-end with some friends in the country.

On my return to New York I found that our sailing had been indefinitely postponed by orders from the Admiralty at home.

Other ships that were outward bound for New York were diverted to Halifax by wireless, the reason being that the Admiralty wanted to locate the German armed cruisers that were known to be at large before our ships were allowed to go to sea.

We were held up for five days, and then our office had to decide which ship, the *Adriatic* or *Olympic*, should sail first and take all the passengers that were booked for both ships.

It was decided that the *Adriatic* should have that honour—if honour it was—and when our pilot came on board he said, “The *Vaterland* is sailing too.” This made me feel a little uneasy, and I expressed the hope that she wouldn’t be allowed to sail until we were well clear, as it was commonly reported that all the fast German steamers carried guns on board all ready for mounting, and she had a speed of about 24 knots against our 17½. The New York papers had mentioned a few days previously that one of them—the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, I think it was—had sailed with her guns already mounted, and deeply loaded with coal. No one had been allowed on board for some time previous to her sailing, and her officers had stated that

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what the reporters had taken for guns were really spare crank-shafts.

On making further inquiries I found that the pilot had made a mistake. It was the Belgian steamer *Vaderland* that had asked for a pilot, and not the *Vaterland*.

I received orders to keep away from our usual track and not to carry any lights at night, so I decided when we got outside the harbour to go north of all the tracks, so as to be as close as possible to any of our men-of-war that might be in the vicinity of Halifax.

We were the first British passenger steamer to leave New York after the declaration of war, and the "send off" that we got from the other ships lying at the piers and from the New York people is something I will never forget. The pier we sailed from, or rather the end of it, was packed with people as we backed out into the river, and to my surprise they all sang "God save the King" as we went.

The *Olympic* was lying at the next pier, then came several Cunard steamers, and farther down the river the French Compagnie Transatlantique steamers. Their crews were all gathered together on them, and as we passed they cheered and sang the National Anthem and other patriotic songs, accompanied in many cases by their bands.

On the other side of the river the German steamers were berthed—there were lots of people on them watching us go to sea. But never a sound from them, and we rather wondered what thoughts were passing through their minds. The ships remained where they were till the United States of America came into the war, and then they were made use of to transport her troops across to France!

We encountered but one ship on the way across, and then all we saw was her searchlight circling in the air, so, as we were then somewhere south of Nova Scotia, we took her for one of H.M. destroyers on patrol. The weather

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was foggy at the time and the rays of her searchlight could be seen over the fog, but she didn't see us.

On our arrival at Liverpool I sent in my mobilization papers in connexion with the Royal Naval Reserve, and received a communication in reply telling me to remain where I was.

The rush of American tourists who had been caught in Europe by the war was in full swing, and we were told that every available berth in all classes had been taken by them. As a consequence we were to be a very full ship. Passengers who in the ordinary course would have taken First Class rooms were booked in the Second and Third Classes, and were only too glad to get in anywhere to escape the troubles in Europe. Many of them complained bitterly of the indignities they had suffered at the hands of the Germans while making their way to the coast.

For some reason or other best known to those who were responsible for putting them on board, four 6-inch guns were mounted while we were in dock, two at the forward end of the ship and two aft, and nucleus crews of Naval ratings disguised as merchant seamen were shipped to work them—with volunteers from my crew to fill up the complement. I protested against this as I considered the presence of the guns would be an added danger to the two thousand or so United States citizens I was to embark for passage to New York. There was no talk at that time of submarines sinking passenger ships, and I understood that the armament was supplied to the ship for the purpose of defending her from any German raiders we might meet.

Sailing day came in due course, and we went alongside the landing-stage to embark our passengers. Judging from the remarks made by them when they came on board I feel sure the great majority of them would have refused to sail in the ship had there been any possibility for them to take passage in one of a less warlike appearance.

Several Naval officers came on board at the stage to

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inspect our armament, and the senior officer, Captain —, greeted me with the remark: "Hello, Pirate." That was the last straw, and I burst out with: "Yes, that is exactly what they have turned the ship into—a pirate ship—but if anybody thinks I am going to be so foolish as to fire the guns if we meet a raider when I have two thousand Americans on board they are making a big mistake. I wouldn't do it even if Winston Churchill ordered me to." He was then First Lord of the Admiralty.

When we got to sea the Naval ratings as well as the volunteers from my crew had to be exercised at the guns to comply with the instructions I had received before sailing, my Second Officer, who was a Lieutenant R.N.R., taking charge of the drill. This was a constant source of interest to the small boys we had amongst our passengers, and each time they would notice preparations being made they would shout to each other: "Come on, they are going to fire the guns."

Needless to say no guns were ever fired, but the small boys never lost hope, and their shouts would cause consternation amongst the ladies. Many of them went into hysterics, so that the Doctor would be a busy man when drill took place. No amount of assurance from the ship's people that the guns would never be fired seemed to satisfy them.

Had we been unlucky enough to meet a German raider on our way across the Atlantic she would, to my mind, have been perfectly justified in opening fire on us as soon as she saw we were armed; whereas, if we had had no guns, the most she could have done would be to take some members of the ship's company as prisoners and make arrangements for the ship to be taken to some neutral port to be interned, and New York or Boston would most likely have been chosen.

Later on in the war, when submarines were about, the arming of merchant ships was a different proposition, as

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passengers then knew the risks they were taking. But no guns were available then for a very long time!

Nothing untoward took place until we arrived at New York, and then the question of the guns became a diplomatic one.

The United States Government took exception to the forward ones being on board, as according to them they could only be there for purposes of offence, and only defensive guns were permitted by International regulations to enter a neutral port.

The question to be decided was whether we were to be allowed the customary twenty-four hours to coal or be interned during the rest of the war.

We were allowed to get on with the discharging of our cargo and reloading and to coal the ship during the time the negotiations were going on at Washington, and it was only an hour or so before the time we were advertised to sail that permission came for me to be allowed to clear the ship at the Custom-House, and then only on the understanding that the offensive guns were to be removed before entering a United States port again.

All our guns and ammunition were landed on our return to Liverpool, and no more were supplied to the *Adriatic* while I remained in command of her.

On our next voyage from New York we had the honour of bringing over Sir Robert Borden, Premier of Canada, to attend a meeting of the Dominion Premiers who had been summoned to London for consultation.

Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, our Ambassador at Washington, came down to New York to see him off, and was accompanied by the chief of our Secret Service at Washington—or it may have been the United States Secret Service of which he was chief, as I am not sufficiently well acquainted with the details of the staff attached to an Embassy to know whether a Secret Service is included in it. Either will do for my story, and those who do know, if they are

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good enough to read my book, can decide for themselves which it really was.

While Sir Cecil and Sir Robert were engaged with each other, the Secret Service man came up to my room, and after a moment or two of hesitation, during which I thought I detected his knees shaking, he explained who he was, and then said: "You have a most dangerous man amongst your passengers, Captain, who won't hesitate to lose his own life providing he can destroy the ship. You must watch him carefully."

I promised to do so, and after he had given me the name the individual was travelling under and told me he had a false passport, I asked him if Sir Robert Borden knew about it. He said: "Yes. His Excellency is giving him all information now."

We sailed, and I detailed somebody to watch the man. That evening while he was at his dinner a very careful examination of his baggage was made, but nothing of an incriminating nature was found.

Sir Robert and his party honoured me by accepting seats at my table in the saloon, and during meals we used to joke about the man. One of Sir Robert's secretaries, whom everybody called John—I don't think I ever heard his name—was detailed by Sir Robert to keep an eye on him and to report progress at every meal. Sir Robert himself played games with the suspect on deck, and he was generally looked on as a very much maligned individual during the trip.

On our arrival at Liverpool we gave full particulars of what the Secret Service man had told us. The man was questioned very closely, all his papers examined, and eventually it was decided that he was, as he represented himself to be, an engineer of some kind. He was allowed to land and go about his business.

I may as well tell here the sequel, so far as we were concerned.

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Some five or six months later, when we were at sea, the Purser brought up to my room a Sunday newspaper which he had been reading, and pointed out an account of a divorce case in which the man concerned was correspondent. When he appeared at the Court to give his evidence a Scotland Yard detective arrested him, stating that they had been looking for him for over a year.

The paper stated that he was a spy and had been using the woman concerned in the case as a decoy to get information for him.

Sir Robert remarked one morning on the small number of passengers we had on board, and said: "It is a pity you couldn't advertise the fact that I was coming, then you would have had many more, as they would know that destroyers would be sent to meet us before we reached the danger zone."

Sir Robert impressed everybody on board with his geniality and kindness, as a man to be trusted in any emergency, and whose strength of character would be of service to the Empire.

When the German submarines began to ply farther afield and steering zigzag courses was instituted by the Admiralty as a means of protection from them, being of an inquiring turn of mind, I asked the Naval Officer from whom I received the route I was to take, what exactly was meant by steering zigzag courses?

"To tell you the truth, I don't exactly know," he replied. Then I asked him would an alteration of two points at a time be sufficient.

"Ample, I should say. But what is your speed?"

"Seventeen and a half knots."

"You need not worry about submarines," he smiled.

"You are immune going at that speed."

I have often told this story to passengers when they have blamed Captain Turner for the loss of the *Lusitania*,

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sometimes in very bitter terms, and have added to it: "He was probably told the same thing, and he was going nineteen knots at the time she was torpedoed!"

Many more German submarines were reported than ever existed, in my opinion. The following experience will illustrate what I mean. We were coming up Channel one forenoon in the *Adriatic* when the look-out man on the docking bridge aft reported a submarine on our port quarter. We looked anxiously in that direction, but there was nothing in sight. I telephoned aft to ask if they could still see it. No, they couldn't, but a few minutes later they reported it again—getting closer this time. We looked again, but nothing was there. This was repeated several times, and then it occurred to me what it was they were reporting.

About one minute or so after we altered our course in zigzagging the new wave we made would run into our previous wave, and this, together with the effect of the tide, caused a movement in the water exactly like the ripple made by the periscope of a submarine when steaming ahead. The passengers on the after-deck, to say nothing about the look-out men, were getting very excited by this time, so I sent one of the junior officers aft to explain the cause of their excitement. He telephoned forward to say that they still thought it was a real submarine, so I told him to ask them when they would like to see it, and that in a minute after he had rung the after-telegraph as a signal to me I would show it to them again exactly in the same position.

After we had done that for them once or twice their excitement died down, and they were satisfied they were in no immediate danger.

I heard of one of H.M. cruisers firing several times at her own wake near the Liverpool Bar Light-vessel for possibly the same reason. We would undoubtedly have fired, too, had we had anything to fire with, but that inci-

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dent happened before merchant ships were supplied with guns.

Sir Robert Borden returned with me in the same ship about two months or so later, and was accompanied by Sir Sam Hughes, the Minister of Defence in his Government at that time. Until then Sir Sam had always crossed in the American Line steamers, and many were the jokes I heard from Canadians afterwards about his doing so. In fact, some Canadians who were on board at the time said he wouldn't have been with us then had it not been for Sir Robert being on board.

Sir Sam had his military secretary with him, Colonel —, and I was very much surprised one night at dinner when they were discussing amongst themselves the relative lengths of the lines held by the British and French, and Sir Robert made a statement, Colonel — contradicted him flatly. Sir Robert flushed but didn't say anything, beyond mentioning his informant, but I expect either he or Sir Sam took the Colonel to task for it afterwards.

We had a number of American bankers on board one voyage, in the early days of the war, who had been over to London to discuss financial matters with our Government. One of them told me that the only men they had come in contact with who showed any decision in such things were Lord Reading and Mr. Lloyd George, and had a preference for the latter.

"The rest were hopeless, they would talk about things from every angle for as long as we liked to listen, but no decision would be come to till one of the two would come in and say 'Do that.'"

He also told me that they had promised not to lend any money to any of the states in Eastern Europe, Italy included, unless they were willing to come in on the proper side, presumably ours.

Early in the war, too, we took a lot of disgruntled war

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correspondents back to New York who had flocked across to write the war up for the American papers. They were very bitter against us because they were refused permission to go to the front to carry on their business, and said that any news that was given out by our side was unreliable. The only news message that had any truth in it was that issued from the German headquarters. I don't think many people would have agreed with that statement in England.

Homeward-bound our decks were filled with automobiles without the bodies and motor trucks, and I remember on one occasion that the inspector from our Military Mission discovered a number of them had their axles half sawn through and the cracks filled with some substance to hide the damage. This was evidently the work of a German sympathizer, but whether it had been done before or after they came on to our dock to await shipment was never discovered.

We had a staff of detectives on our piers at New York employed by the company to look out for such things and to prevent unauthorized people from getting on board the ships.

The United States authorities had their men on watch too, and considering the large number of British ships that sailed from New York and the great number of Germans that were about, there was very little sabotage committed, which proves where American unofficial sympathies were at the outbreak of war, even if the official ones remained "Strictly neutral" for a considerable time.

Many people have told me that I ought to have a fund of stories about prominent people.

I have met many, of course, during the years I have been crossing the Atlantic, but my intercourse with them has been limited, for beyond meeting those of them who have been good enough to accept seats at my table I have had very little opportunity of talking to them. The White

War

Star regulations are framed with a view to the executive officers having as little intercourse with passengers as is possible while their steamers are under way at sea, and we are requested by the managers not to take part in any of the amusements of passengers.

Judging from my own experience these are very wise regulations from the travelling public's point of view, as well as from our own, as they are conducive to good discipline being maintained both amongst the passengers and the ship's company. They tend to inspire confidence in the passengers that their safety is our first consideration, as the following incident will show.

After a particularly easy passage from New York, no fog or gales of wind to worry me, I was standing near the gangway waiting for one of our managers to come on board when two elderly ladies came up to me, and almost with tears in their eyes thanked me for my devotion to duty. They had evidently been nervous in unfamiliar surroundings and by not seeing me about the decks during the passage talking to passengers had come to the conclusion that I had been paying special attention to their safety.

In the event of trouble arising passengers are apt to blame the ship's officers unduly if they see too much of them. An instance of this occurs to me :

Some time ago a large passenger steamer went on shore during a dense fog in the neighbourhood of Ushant and only two people were saved from her—one passenger and a Quartermaster.

The passenger, a military officer—who, by the way, ought to have known better—stated at the inquiry that took place later into the cause of the loss of the ship, that if the ship's officers had paid as much attention to the safety of the ship as they did to the concerts and balls that were held on board she would never have been lost.

An outrageous statement to make, as it is incredible

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that any officer who was responsible for the navigation of a steamer would attend any such function during a fog off Ushant.

These regulations apply also to officials of the company when they are crossing, and I have been amused at times at their efforts to keep clear of us so as to avoid even any appearance of giving instructions while we are at sea.

Mr. Sanderson, our present Chairman, was coming home from New York once with me when we sighted a ship on fire, and I thought perhaps if I consulted him as to what I should do with the crew, providing we were fortunate enough to rescue them, I might escape some questions on my arrival home, as to why I had done whatever was done.

We were then about thirty miles away from New York, so after altering course to run down to the ship, I sent one of my junior officers to Mr. Sanderson to ask if he would kindly come on the bridge.

He came, rather wondering what I wanted, I thought, and I asked him what I should do with the crew providing we picked them up. I put two or three alternative proposals before him.

He listened patiently to what I had to say, and then answered: "Do whatever you think is proper, Captain Hayes, and if we have any criticisms to make we will do so when you give in your report at the office," and then went down from the bridge.

As it happened the crew had already been taken off, so I had no decision to make and the managers no criticisms to offer; not that they would have done so in any event, I am quite sure of that.

CHAPTER XI

TO THE DARDANELLES

ON our arrival at Liverpool in the *Adriatic* on September 16, 1915, I was transferred to the *Olympic*.

At this time troops were urgently needed for the Dardanelles campaign, and several of the largest and most speedy ships in the Merchant Service which, after the crowd of American tourists had been repatriated, had been considered too valuable to risk at sea, were chartered as transports to rush them out to Mudros.

The *Olympic* was then lying in the Gladstone Dock, Liverpool, being fitted out for carrying troops, and I must say that when I first joined her I felt more or less in a condition of bewilderment.

Everything on board was in a state of utter confusion, and I had not only to learn my way about what was then the largest British ship, but had to accustom myself to the vagaries of the Naval Transport Officers who were then in charge at Liverpool. I found them very different from those I had become used to during the South African War.

In those days we flew the Transport flag, a blue ensign with a yellow anchor in the fly, but apparently it was considered now that if we sailed under that ensign it would prove an added incentive to the enemy to attack. So, though we wore R.N.R. uniform both ashore and afloat, we sailed under the good old "Red Duster" we were all so proud of.

I have always made it a rule during my sea life to be as amenable as possible to those placed in authority over

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me, but I very nearly got into trouble at my first interview with the Principal Naval Transport Officer after being appointed to the *Olympic*, and this remains with me as an amusing memory. As everybody knows, officers in the Merchant Service wear civilian clothes when they are not on board their ships, and it was in that garb that I appeared before him, and the following conversation took place.

"Do you belong to the Naval Reserve?"

"Yes, sir."

"What is your rank in it?"

"Commander."

"Retired list?"

"No, active."

"Then you will wear your uniform."

"Very good, sir."

He then went on to tell me that he would obtain temporary commissions for those of my officers who did not belong to the Reserve, and I in my turn put a question:

"May I ask what rank will be given, sir?"

"Sub-Lieutenants."

I then asked for higher rank for my assistant commander, and pointed out that he would have to represent me on inspection of the troops' quarters and would have to deal with the officer in command of the troops, possibly a General, and said that the rank of Sub-Lieutenant would not carry much weight and that a commission of a higher rank would not cost any more as it would not affect his pay. He was disinclined to fall in with my views, so I added: "If he doesn't get it he can wear the company's uniform at sea, which includes 'a brass hat,' and that will give him the necessary authority."

He waxed very angry at this, shook his finger at me, and said: "Take care, sir. Remember you are talking about the King's Commission, and if you are not careful your commission may be taken away from you."



THE *OLYMPIC* ON TRANSPORT SERVICE

As seen from the air

To the Dardanelles

I expect he thought that would end the discussion, but I only smiled and said: "Well, sir, I have been in the R.N.R. for a good many years and I have not made anything out of it yet, in fact it has been a source of expense to me, and even if they do take my commission they can't take my job away, and that is what provides me with means of livelihood."

That seemed to ease the situation and our interview proceeded more amicably, and I received the many instructions he gave me with due deference.

Two guns were mounted on the *Olympic*, a 12-pounder forward and a 4.7-inch aft, and four Naval ratings came with them.

A few days later we embarked our troops to the number of about six thousand of all ranks, and I am sure that a finer body of men were never gathered together anywhere. The Southern Counties Yeomanry they were, and somebody told me when they were on board that more wealth was represented by them than had ever been on one ship before, not even excepting a transatlantic liner in the height of the season. This may or may not have been so, I didn't ask them about it and they never volunteered the information, but whether it was or not they were very keen on their job and soon settled down to the routine of the ship. I was also told that they had only had two weeks' training as infantry before their embarkation, which didn't seem a great amount to me. The Welsh Horse were amongst them, and their glee-singers took a prominent part in the entertainments that were held on board. Very good they were, too, though I never heard them till we were lying peacefully at anchor in Mudros Harbour before they left us.

We were escorted by three destroyers until we had crossed the mouth of the English Channel. Before they left, the Colonel of the West Kents asked me to send a wireless message to the parents of a young Eton boy who

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was on board. He was a bugler in the regiment and was supposed to have been left behind on account of his youth, but had succeeded in stowing himself away both on the train and the ship, and was not discovered till we were well out at sea. A plucky youngster, and as a reward for his pluck he was allowed to land on the Peninsula of Gallipoli before being sent home again.

We were all very much grieved later in the war to see his name as a Second Lieutenant amongst the killed in France.

I couldn't send the message by wireless as our orders were only to use it in case of emergency, so signalled it to one of our escort with a request that he would telegraph it on arrival at his base.

The Chaplain of the West Kents came up to my room one afternoon and asked me if I was the same Captain Hayes who was in command of the *Britannic* when she took the Australians to and from the Cape during the South African War. I told him I was, and then he said: "I remember your giving them a dressing down. You must watch this General. He will run your ship for you if you let him."

In real life he was a thin stripling during the days he spoke of, Chaplain to the Bishop of Brisbane, and during the interval he had developed into a portly Archdeacon, so that there was some excuse for my not recognizing him at once.

All went well, and we had almost passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, "during the dark hours," as per my Sailing Orders, when we had to switch on our steaming lights for a moment to get clear of some steamer that was proceeding in a direction that we could not quite make out. One of our patrol boats spotted us and ordered us into Gibraltar for "examination." The boarding officer came on board, and, after securing the particulars he required, ordered us to proceed, at the same time giving vent to his

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opinion, rather strongly, that we ought to be escorted through the Mediterranean.

When we were passing Malta we had again to switch on our lights for a similar purpose, and were challenged by the signal station on shore. In reply I gave him our number, 2,810. This did not satisfy him, and after the query, "What ship?" had been repeated several times I gave him *Olympic*. Then he signalled, "The Commander-in-Chief wishes to know where you are bound and what troops you have on board," so that I began to wonder whether the restriction regarding the use of lights were not rather one-sided. I did not give him the required information, and made up my mind that if I was called "over the coals" for not doing so, I would draw on my imagination and say that our signalling lamp had broken down.

I was sorry that I could not see more of the officers who were on board, as they were a jolly lot, but I never felt easy in my mind when away from the vicinity of the bridge. I could never know the moment I might be wanted, and so had my meals in my room, which was practically on the bridge.

One day I had occasion to send for the smoke-room steward about something or other, and took the opportunity of asking him how things were going on in the smoke-room. "Well, sir," he said, "if these men can only fight as well as they can drink, the war is won"—a remark that amused many of them when I repeated it to them later.

I am not quite certain of my figures in this, but the proportion is fairly accurate. Out of sixty-four Masters of Hounds there were in England we had forty-two of them on board, and one night they had a Hunt Dinner, and each Master sounded the call of his hunt on the horns they had with them.

One afternoon as we were approaching the eastern end

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of the Mediterranean a ship's boat was sighted with a number of men in it, flying a large French flag. I had not much time for consideration, but decided that I could not leave them in that predicament, adrift in an open boat miles away from anywhere. I slowed the ship down, the boat came alongside, and the crew of the French steamer *Provincia*, some thirty-four men, climbed up our pilot ladder and we proceeded again at full speed. The Captain of her gave me the position in which his ship had been sunk by an Austrian submarine at nine o'clock that morning.

I am glad to say that the comment on board amongst the officers was that I had done perfectly right in picking them up, but others thought differently. Our Commander-in-Chief in the Eastern Mediterranean issued a circular letter headed, "Indiscretion shown by the Master of a Transport," in which my misdoings and those of another Master who had performed a similar action were detailed. We were warned not to do it again. The French Admiral came on board some time after our arrival at Mudros and tried to persuade me that I had performed a heroic action, and the French Government later awarded me "la Médaille de Sauvetage en Or de 2ème classe."

A machine gun's crew on board made short work of the boat as it drifted astern. And that was the last of the *Provincia*.

Some two hours later, as the sun was sinking, the periscope of a submarine was reported about six points on our port bow a considerable distance away. I altered course to bring it astern and our guns opened fire on it. After their first shot a portion of its rusty hull appeared above the surface. Another round was fired at that, and as we saw nothing further of it the general impression was that it had been holed and sunk. The torpedo that she fired at us passed under our stern some little distance away. "The general impression" received a damper

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when I related our experience to one of our submarine officers while we were lying in anchor in Mudros Harbour. I had mentioned the part of the submarine that had come to the surface as a proof that she had gone down at an angle, and he replied: "Oh, no, that would be caused by unskilful handling of the planes when he fired his torpedo at you. The alteration of the displacement caused by firing a torpedo makes a submarine break surface unless you are very careful in handling the planes at the time."

The ss. *Aragon*, of the Royal Mail Line, was moored in Mudros Harbour and was used as headquarters by the Transport Officers. Any high officials of the army who visited that base were accommodated on board, so that there was a constant stream of people using her more or less as an hotel. Rumour said that when she was finally given up, when headquarters were established on shore, they found difficulty in moving her owing to the number of empty bottles that had been thrown overboard from her, but I am afraid I cannot vouch for the truth of this as I was not there at the time.

On my arrival I went on board to report, and while I was sitting on deck with the Transport Officer, whom I had known previously as a passenger crossing the Atlantic, an officer stopped in front of us.

"Hallo, Hayes," he greeted me with, "what are you doing out here?"

I couldn't place him, so made a guess at a name that wasn't his, and he said: "No, I'm Granard." It was the Earl of Granard whom I had taken out to South Africa as a Subaltern in the Scots Guards and whom I had met many times crossing the Atlantic, but his experiences on the Peninsula had so altered him that, until he spoke, I didn't know him. He and his General, Sir Bryan Mahon, had landed at Mudros the previous day from Suvla Bay. They both came off to the *Olympic*, and from their con-

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versation I gathered some idea of the discomforts and privations that were prevalent on the Peninsula.

I remember the General remarking to somebody that his best friend's heels were sticking out of the sand within six feet of his dug-out and that he couldn't be buried properly. This has remained in my memory perhaps for the reason that I had known his "best friend" as a Lieutenant in the 10th Hussars, having brought him home wounded from South Africa where he had won the Victoria Cross.

Our troops remained on board for several days while transport to take them to the Peninsula was being provided, and we lowered a number of our boats to give them exercise in rowing about the harbour.

In course of conversation one day with the Transport Officer I mentioned what the boarding officer at Gibraltar said about our being escorted through the Mediterranean, and he replied that it was not necessary as we were never more than twenty miles away from a man-of-war at any time. I very much doubted this at the time, but did not like to contradict him.

I received proof when we were homeward bound that his statement, to say the least of it, was "greatly exaggerated."

We picked up an SOS on our wireless one morning about 10 o'clock from a ship called the *Baron Napier*, saying that he was being chased by a submarine which was gaining on him and that his gun was outranged by the enemy's. It was most interesting to get the succession of messages he sent during the day to men-of-war that were hastening to his assistance from Malta and other positions far distant. There was a fresh north-west wind blowing and there was a choppy sea on at the time, and her Captain proved himself a man of resource. He altered his course at right angles to the sea, whereby the accuracy of the submarine's gun became impaired, and she finally gave

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up the chase about 6 P.M. The last message we intercepted read that the *Baron Napier* had resumed his course to the westward. The Captain received congratulations on his escape from the men-of-war who had been too far away from him to render assistance.

After our troops had disembarked and we had got sufficient coal on board to take us to Spezia—where we were to coal for England—we sailed from Mudros and arrived off that port one fine morning at daybreak. Not finding any pilot boat about, I steamed slowly in towards the breakwater to give them an opportunity to come out to meet me, when suddenly we heard a gun fired, and we saw an Italian destroyer coming out from under the land flying the signal "Follow me." He commenced turning in circles in front of us, and as there was no possibility of obeying his signal, I backed astern. By and by the destroyer sheered close enough to us for a sleepy-looking officer to shout "Mines." Later she came alongside, and an officer came on board who took us through the mine-field and inside the breakwater, where the local pilot boarded us and took us to an anchorage.

Coaling was a very slow process at Spezia, so one morning I went on board H.M.S. *Dublin* in the dry dock where she was undergoing repairs after being hit by a torpedo, and asked her Captain if he couldn't hurry things up. He very kindly sent his Commander with me to see the Commandant of the Navy Yard, who received us very cordially. After the formalities were over, I laid the situation before him, and in reply he shrugged his shoulders and said: "We are fitted to put three thousand tons of coal a day into a ship. The *Olympic* is not fitted to receive it." Then pointing his finger at me, "You did not build her," then at himself, "Neither did I. There is another day to-morrow," and shrugged his shoulders again as much as to say, "That closes the interview."

I demurred at his airy criticism of the *Olympic*, and

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told him that on many occasions she had had over six thousand tons of coal put into her and sailed again in thirty-six hours. Then he explained his difficulties. All his men were busy and he had to engage peasants from the mountains who were not used to the work of coaling.

A few officers on leave, as well as a number of convalescents, chiefly from dysentery, were on board on passage to England, and as I thought the delay might shorten the period of their leave, I spoke to our Consul on the subject, and he very kindly took the matter up. The Italian authorities arranged for free transportation overland for them, so they, at any rate, were happy. I learned afterwards that some of them had not reported their arrival till we got to Liverpool, so they wangled about ten days' extra leave, as their time in England only counted from the day they arrived there.

We had a very pleasant time while we were lying at anchor. The Italian authorities would bring parties off to see the ship, and we did our best to entertain them, and in return we received hospitality on shore. They all anxiously inquired as to when England was going to have conscription, and the answer generally was, "Whenever it is considered necessary."

After we had completed coaling we sailed for Liverpool, and arrived there on October 31, 1915.

Mudros was primarily a Naval Base, and the impression seemed to be prevalent amongst the merchant ships that called there on their "lawful occasions" that they were looked on as a necessary evil and that they were treated with scant ceremony in consequence. Judging from the stories I heard, this applied to all Mediterranean ports. One heard of ships that had been ordered to Gibraltar, for instance, being asked when they arrived, "What are you doing here? You are wanted at Alexandria," and being told when they got there that it was at Mudros they were wanted. Or the other way about. Many ships were

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torpedoed that might have escaped that fate had the controlling organization at home possessed more knowledge of the requirements at the different places in the Mediterranean.

Mudros seemed to be the place they liked least to be ordered to, as the following story will show. On one of our voyages we had on board to take home several crews of ships that had been sunk by torpedoes in the eastern Mediterranean. One day the Captain of one of them asked me what I thought was the first thing that flashed through his mind after the torpedo had struck his ship I told him I hadn't the faintest idea.

"Thank God, she won't go to Mudros," he replied.

The foregoing remarks do not apply to the troop transports. Personally, I always received every courtesy excepting when I wanted any coal, and then the preliminaries that transpired were only meant to create the proper atmosphere for conducting the negotiations to obtain it, I thought.

On making my report to the Transport Officer I would mention that I required, say, eight hundred tons of coal to take me to Spezia, and he would reply, "I have nothing to do with that; you must see the Flag Captain about it."

I would go on board the Flagship and (after the first voyage) would be received by the Flag Captain with "That damned thing here again? I thought they would have got you this time. I suppose you want some coal?"

"Yes, sir," I would reply, "about eight hundred tons."

"Well, you won't get it," he would say, and after a few more pleasantries we would settle down to business. In due course we got it.

From these interviews I judged that his chief object in life was to prevent any coal getting out of Mudros that once got in, excepting for purely Naval purposes.

We made four voyages to Mudros, calling at Spezia each time for coal on the homeward passage.

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On one passage out the officer commanding the troops had very strange notions as to the action that would be taken by an enemy submarine on sighting a troop-ship. He must have thought that we were back in the age of chivalry, as he asked me what I would do in the event of one of them ordering me to take the ship to a neutral port for internment. At first I didn't think he was serious, so answered, "Give him the 4.7."

"Suppose the 4.7 was out of action?" he replied.

"Have a shot at him with the 12-pounder," was my answer, and thought that would finish the argument. But no, he came back at me again:

"Supposing both your guns were disabled, what would you do?"

"Run for it," I said. "But there is no possibility of such a contingency arising, as the first thing he would do as soon as he got close enough to us would be to fire a torpedo into us, and if that proved insufficient he would give us another. Even after that he would be careful enough to keep out of rifle range till the ship sank."

On one of our return journeys we had a number of the Royal Naval Division on board coming home for leave before taking up the garrisoning of the islands in the Ægean Sea that were occupied by us. Major Asquith, who was in command, said he was going to give his father, the Prime Minister, his opinion of the way the Dardanelles Expedition had been bungled by the action—or lack of it—of the home authorities.

After we had got clear of the islands we saw a steamer steering south flying the "Submarine in Sight" signal, and a few minutes later we sighted a submarine on the surface close to another steamer, the crew of which were lowering their boats to abandon ship. The submarine left her while this was in progress and commenced to chase the first steamer we saw. We altered course away from them, to the westward, and about twenty minutes later

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we met one of our destroyers and signalled the bearing and distance of the submarine and the business he was engaged on. The destroyer altered course for the scene and opened out to full speed, and the probabilities are that she appeared in time to save both steamers.

On our last trip to Mudros the Peninsula had been evacuated, and some of the Yeomanry officers whom we had taken out on our first voyage were on shore waiting for transportation to Egypt. They came off to the ship and asked if they might give a dinner on board. "Why not stay on board while the ship is coaling? It will be better than living in a tent on shore, and we will only charge you the rate we get for victualling officers," I said.

They accepted my invitation, and I don't think I have ever seen anybody, anywhere, enjoy themselves so much as they did while they were with us. Plenty to eat and drink and nothing to do seemed to appeal to them after their experiences at Gallipoli. They were the more elderly of the officers who had come out in the ship, and I remember Sir Samuel Scott remarking at dinner one night that they had "stuck it better than the young fellows." Most of the latter had to be invalided home suffering from dysentery.

After breakfast one morning I was on the bridge talking to Colonel Sofer-Whitburn when we heard two or three mild explosions. I think he must have been thinking of his estates at home and the sport he was missing, as his first remark after hearing the shots was: "Hallo, is that somebody shooting partridges?" I happened to be looking in the water at the time and saw the splashes about fifty yards or less away from the ship.

"I don't know what they are shooting at, Colonel, but that is where they hit," I said, pointing at the marks left in the water.

I went into my bathroom after that and had hardly

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sat down when my servant came running into my room saying: "It's an aeroplane dropping bombs on us, sir." I went out on the bridge again as soon as I could, and was in time to see the machine, high up, and away in the distance, returning to some place in Bulgaria where we afterwards heard it had set out from. It didn't get back. I had a letter from the Colonel some time after, telling me that two of our planes had gone up from Imbros and had succeeded in bringing it down.

On one of our homeward voyages we sailed for England without a definite port being mentioned in my Sailing Orders, so while we were coaling at Spezia I tried, through our Consul there, to find out to which port we had to go. I know he sent a cable to inquire, but no reply was received. We had head winds and seas after leaving Spezia, so "the dark hours" had sped and daylight was coming in as we passed Europa Point. We were ordered into Gibraltar by the patrol, and when the boarding officer came on board I told him about this, and he said he would go on shore to find out. In the meantime I was told to keep the ship under way as he would be back in about twenty minutes. Three hours passed before he returned, and in the meantime I had become a little impatient and perhaps a little fidgety, as from the stress laid on passing through the Straits of Gibraltar during the dark hours in my Sailing Orders, I naturally concluded they were a happy hunting ground for submarines. When he came on the bridge and said: "You are to proceed in accordance with your instructions," I gave vent to my feelings a little, and replied: "I haven't got any, and I am going to Liverpool, and if the Admiralty want me to go anywhere else they can order me to do so by wireless."

When we got to Liverpool we took them all by surprise. No one knew we were coming, and the first intimation the Principal Transport Officer had that we were anywhere in the neighbourhood was my appearance at his

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office on a good Sunday afternoon to make my report. He was very angry at being caught napping, as it were, and tried in various ways to put the blame on me for such a thing happening, but without effect, till at last he thought of the "Bedding Return"—an important document retailing the number of hammocks and blankets on board and how many of them needed washing. Then he let himself go. "Have you got your bedding return with you?" he asked.

"No, sir," I replied, "I thought that Monday morning would be time enough for that."

"I require it immediately on the ship's arrival, sir," he answered, "and see that you bring it with you when you make your report in the future."

I promised him that I would bear his instructions in mind, and then complained about the way we had been delayed at Gibraltar.

He must have made severe representations on that subject, as the next time we were boarded at Gibraltar the officer could hardly wait long enough to hear what I had to say, but hurried off saying: "We have heard enough about detaining you, and had to write a five-page letter explaining the reasons for it."

During the time we were taking troops to Mudros I had noticed the difficulty the officer in command of them had in getting the large number of them we carried settled down and in getting his routine going. The ship was so much larger than any they had had experience of, and, of course, there were more units to be dealt with. I recommended, after our second voyage, that a Military Staff, consisting of an Adjutant, Quartermaster, Sergeant-Major and Quartermaster-Sergeant, should be appointed permanently to each of the large transports so that they would know the ship and be ready to assist the officer who was to command the troops while they were embarking.

Anything new apparently takes a long time to mate-

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rialize, especially where the Navy and Army are concerned; however, by dint of much letter-writing my recommendation was accepted—in a minor degree at any rate—and after we had finished with the Mediterranean part of our work, a ship's Sergeant-Major and Quartermaster-Sergeant were appointed, and very useful men they proved themselves to be, especially with the Canadian and, later, American troops we brought over, as their officers, with very few exceptions, had not had any previous experience of transports.

Our Sergeant-Major, before he left us to instruct others in their duties for similar positions in other ships, was given the rank of Lieutenant, and later became a Captain attached to the Embarkation Staff at Liverpool.

Some time after our last voyage to the Mediterranean, a very handsome silver cigar box was sent to me by the officers of the West Kent Yeomanry, with all their signatures engraved on the lid. Needless to say, I thoroughly appreciated the kindly feeling that had prompted them to send it to me as a memento of the few days some of them had spent on board the *Olympic* after the evacuation of the Peninsula.

I acknowledged the receipt of it to the firm in London who had been instructed to send it to me. There was no other address enclosed in the box in which it was packed, and as in those days of secrecy I had no knowledge of where the West Kents were, I concluded they must still be in Egypt, as they were waiting transport for that country when I last saw them at Mudros.

I wrote a letter of thanks to Colonel Sofer-Whitburn, their commanding officer, asking him kindly to convey to the other officers my deep appreciation of their gift, and addressed it to him, "c/o Eastern Mediterranean Expeditionary Forces." Possibly the ship that took my letter out was torpedoed; at any rate, it never reached him, for a long time afterwards, Colonel Concanon, one of our joint man-

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agers, received a letter from Major H. Maitland Kersey, in which he said he had met Colonel Sofer-Whitburn, who had mentioned that he thought it very strange that I had never written to thank him. He felt sure there must be some misapprehension, hence his letter to Colonel Concanon, who passed it on to me.

I then wrote a second letter to Colonel Sofer-Whitburn, addressed to White's Club, and trust that he and his officers were satisfied with my explanation, as I would not like them to think I treated their kindness lightly.

CHAPTER XII

"THE OLD RELIABLE"

WE little thought when we sailed from Liverpool on our first voyage to Halifax on March 23, 1916, to bring over Canadian troops, that Halifax would become a "home from home" to the ship's company, and that the name of the ship would become a household word throughout Canada. I shall never forget the kindness and hospitality that I received at Halifax, and I don't think that any member of my crew will either; we were received with open arms, and nothing that they could do for us was too much for them to do. I shall never forget, either, the many friends I made all over Canada during my many crossings with Canadian troops on board, and if I could accept all the invitations I received to visit them "after you retire and have more leisure," I am sure I could live rent and house free for the remainder of my days.

In course of time the name of the ship dropped out of the newspapers, and the columns they devoted to accounts of our arrivals and the people we brought over with us were headed: "The Old Reliable in Port again," in the largest type they could command. I don't think a greater compliment was ever paid to a ship, but an even greater one was accorded her later on when the troops were returning home.

Until they reached Southampton the men would not know by what ship they were going. As the train was entering the docks they would all be hanging out of the carriage windows, and the first man who caught sight of her four funnels would yell "*Olympic*," or "The Old Reliable," and word would be passed from window to

“The Old Reliable”

window and a cheer would go up that made the hearts of all on board glow inwardly. They deserved the best that we could give them, and as the instructions from our managers were to spare no expense to make them happy and comfortable while they were with us, we gave it to them.

The feeding of British troops was a comparatively simple matter, even for the six thousand we had on board. They got their rations served as palatably as possible, that was all, and any extras they required they could purchase from the canteen.

The Canadian, and later American troops, had to be victualled as 3rd-Class passengers, and that was a totally different proposition; but through good organization it was done to the satisfaction of everybody concerned. I heard of only one complaint from the Canadians that I remember, and after the officer commanding them on that trip had made his investigation he was punished “for making frivolous complaints.”

Personally I never realized what feeding six thousand “3rd-Class passengers” meant till one Sunday morning when the Chief Steward had occasion to come up to my room to consult me about something or other, I forget what. After I had settled whatever it was, he asked me how many eggs I thought they had served that morning for breakfast. After a moment’s consideration, to encourage him, I made a wild guess, and said: “About fifteen hundred, I should think.” With an air of pride, I thought, he replied: “Thirteen thousand five hundred, and bacon to match.”

I told him to congratulate the cooks from me on their industry.

It wasn’t only the youth of Canada that volunteered so readily to come to the rescue of civilization, or to the aid of the Mother Country, or whatever it was that prompted them to come across in such numbers. We brought over

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one private soldier of the mature age of sixty-two whom I particularly remember. He had been the first, so I was told, to volunteer, and he did it to encourage the youth of the small town he lived in to follow his example. While the trench warfare lasted he managed to do his part without his age being detected, but when the troops commenced to move he couldn't keep up with them, so was sent home, much to his disgust, and returned with us. Frank Slavin, a veteran of the prize ring, came over with us as a Sergeant in one of the regiments we carried, and as I remember him being in his prime when I was a youngster in our service, he must have been well on in years when he joined up.

H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, when his term as Governor-General of Canada was drawing to a close and he was on his final tour of inspection, honoured us with a visit one day when we were lying at Halifax with our troops on board. The troops were all paraded on deck, and when he was passing round the ranks he had an un-failing eye for picking out the old soldiers amongst them.

"What regiment did you serve in, my man?" would be his query when he stopped for a word or two with one or the other of them, and I remember him asking one particularly grizzled old veteran after his usual query, "How old are you?"

"Old enough, sir," was his reply; and I expect he had given his age as forty when he enlisted, like the other veteran to whom I have referred, but the Duke knew better.

"Young enough to fight, eh?" he said kindly, and passed along the ranks.

His visit was a red-letter day, and the officers assembled in the smoke-room listened with appreciation to the stirring address he gave them before he left the ship. There were some old soldiers, too, amongst the officers.

The Canadians were a warm-hearted lot, as was evidenced by the number of wives they took back with them, or rather were sent back for them, for only in exceptional

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circumstances were they allowed to travel together. Some of them were so warm-hearted that they must have momentarily forgotten, surely, that they had wives already in Canada when they married others in England, and their forgetfulness naturally led to complications. An officer, high up in the Statistical Department of the Canadian Army, told me when we were going out one voyage that they already had eleven hundred such cases to deal with. “What are we to do with them? We can’t prosecute them all for bigamy. It’s a problem,” he dolefully concluded.

The Canadian troops expressed themselves very strongly, too, on the lack of enthusiasm to enlist displayed by the youth of Ireland. I remember when conscription for that country was “in the air” (where it unfortunately remained) we were one day embarking convalescents at the landing-stage for return to Halifax, when there was an outward bound Cunarder alongside embarking her passengers for New York.

There was a long line of young, able-bodied Irishmen waiting on the stage to escape in her to the United States, and when a young Canadian Sergeant who was assisting in our embarkation saw them he walked up and down the line like a young fighting-cock—he was only about four feet nothing—and told them what he thought of them. His language was picturesque, to say the least of it. He told them, amongst other things, that they were not white men, and that if they examined each other they would find a yellow streak in all of them. Then he pointed to the river and said: “The water is dirty enough now, but it would be dirtier still if you fell into it.”

He was spoiling for a fight, too, and offered to take any number of them on, either singly or together, and when none of them answered, he continued with his insults to try to stir them up.

We wondered why the “emigrants” were being kept so long on the stage, till we found out that the crew of

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the Cunarder had refused to take her to sea if they were allowed to embark. Later they were walked away from the stage back to the boarding-houses, and many were the insults that were fired at them as they passed along the streets.

By the time we entered the Canadian service, more destroyers were available for escort duties, and we usually had two or three of them to accompany us through the danger zone and to meet us again at the rendezvous mentioned in our Sailing Orders. Sometimes the weather was too bad for them to keep up to us, and we left them, as our speed and steering zigzag courses were our best safeguards in such weather.

On one voyage when we were outward bound only one was waiting for us at the Bar Light-vessel when we got outside at about 1 A.M. It was very dark, and after we had discharged our pilot he asked for a shaded light to be shown over our stern so that he could keep track of us. We were going out round the north of Ireland, and I had orders not to pass Instrahull till after sundown, so I had plenty of time to spare.

I set a course to pass well clear of the Chickens Light, and after about an hour I received a message from the destroyer asking if I was going round the south coast of Ireland.

"No," I replied, "but as I have time to spare I am steering wide courses."

As daylight was coming in I looked for the destroyer, and not seeing it telephoned to the after-bridge to ask if they could. "No," was the reply. We were then approaching the Irish land. I had still hours to waste, and decided the best place to waste it was between where we were and the Isle of Man, so zigzagged back to the Chickens again. In an hour or so we sighted a destroyer going in the opposite direction for all he was worth. He asked us our name. We replied, *Olympic*, but apparently

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he did not take it in as he continued on his course. A short time later I altered course back, and when we were approaching the Copeland Lighthouse off Belfast the signal station flashed a message saying that a destroyer had been looking for us since 10 o'clock. We eventually found him, or he us, when we were entering Rathlin Sound. He had followed another ship till daylight, and when he found out his mistake came after us, and when he first saw us thought that we couldn't be the *Olympic* as we were going in the wrong direction! The sea became too high for him to keep up to us before we passed Inishtrahull, so we didn't get much of his company.

The Canadian Government had an agreement with the Home Government that none of their troops would be sent over without an escort. At least that was the reason given to me when I was told on arrival at Halifax on my first voyage there that I would have to wait for and join a convoy. I asked what the speed of the convoy would be, and was told twelve knots. I protested very strongly against this as my speed was over twenty-two, and pointed out that we had gone up and down the Mediterranean, where submarines were supposed to be more numerous than in the Atlantic, without escort, and added that in my humble opinion it would be suicidal to reduce our speed to twelve knots. My protest had the desired effect, and we were allowed to sail alone after our troops had embarked.

On another occasion when leaving Halifax an armed merchant cruiser that was supposed to be able to steam twenty knots was detailed to escort us across the Atlantic. Her Captain evidently didn't like the job any more than I did, as his last words to me before we sailed were, "Keep at least a mile away from us and never come closer." I suppose a 46,000-ton steamer barging about on zigzag courses must have looked rather formidable.

When we got to sea we found that we had to be con-

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tinually reducing and increasing our speed to keep anywhere near him, as his speed varied from about fifteen to eighteen knots during every watch.

We had a few cases of mumps amongst the troops when we sailed, and one officer got it after we were at sea, so I signalled to the escort that the sickness was spreading and that the Medical Officers recommended we should proceed at our utmost speed. He replied: "Sorry I can't release you, old man, but will pass your message on to the Commander-in-Chief."

Next morning we received the desired permission, and we parted company. I am happy to remember that the mumps didn't spread after all, and that the few cases we had were sufficiently well to accompany the rest of the troops when they disembarked.

CHAPTER XIII

MINES AND TORPEDOES

IN the first excitement of the outbreak of war a Patriotic Society was formed in Canada to which liberal funds were subscribed for looking after the dependants of those who volunteered to join the forces that were enrolled for service in France. I think it was thirty dollars a month each man's family was to get during his absence.

When the wives of the contingents that crossed heard that their husbands were being detained in England for long periods to undergo further training before being sent to France, they clamoured to be allowed to go over to be with them to the last.

The Patriotic Society was inundated with applications, and by this time perhaps the committee realized that the numbers of volunteers were becoming so great that they might not be able to collect sufficient funds to carry out their undertaking. I heard that some far-seeing member of the society conceived the idea that if they were to grant free passages to the wives on the understanding that they would go off the funds while they were in England their responsibilities would be lessened. Many of them accepted the condition and were sent over, in numerous cases accompanied by their children, and the problem of what to do with them was transferred to the representatives of the Canadian Government in England. And a big problem it was.

We took thousands of them back in the *Olympic* during our many voyages to Halifax, and they were called "women and children" on the Embarkation Returns. At first the Canadian authorities granted passages at the rate of three pounds per head irrespective of the class they

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travelled in, but, later, when Mrs. So-and-so kicked up a fuss because she was in the 3rd Class and Mrs. Somebody-else who had not paid any more than she had was in the 1st, this was altered, and ten pounds was charged for a 1st Class passage.

The representatives of the Young Men's Christian Association who were sent over with the troops did good work for the men, organizing entertainments, looking after the games and books that were put on board, and so forth. Occasionally, though, we had one whom we could very well have done without. I remember one who invited the men to practically open rebellion, and he had to be restrained in his activities. The troops had been ordered not to use the after companion-way in the 1st Class accommodation excepting in case of emergency. One evening the Y.M.C.A. man was discovered telling them that they were not to obey the order as they were just as good as the officers. This was reported, and the commanding officer took steps to ensure that such a thing would not happen again.

Most of our troops slept in hammocks, but a certain number of rooms were also available for their accommodation. These were highly prized, especially after the ship got well known in the service. The Embarkation Officer would allot these rooms to the units he considered the most desirable, and on one trip they were given to a battalion, composed, I think, of McGill University men. Some members of the other units we had on board resented this and talked of how you had to have a University education to be well treated. When the McGill men offered to turn out and let the others occupy the rooms, however, equanimity was restored and they were all friends again.

On one of our trips from Halifax we took over a full complement of Chinese labourers to work behind the lines in France. We had had varied experience in feeding troops, but none in feeding Chinese. We gathered from

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somebody or other that they were fed mostly on rice, and that the usual allowance per man was three pounds per day. We had very little of it, by comparison, on board, and I remember the consternation in Halifax when I ordered a hundred tons of it to be sent off to the ship. I don't think the purveyors who usually supplied our stores had ever heard of so much rice, but their manager was a man of resource, and sent telegrams all over eastern Canada and succeeded in getting it to Halifax before the Chinamen embarked.

The first day they were on board there was a row—the officer in charge of them said they were not getting enough rice, and the Chief Steward said they couldn't have eaten all he gave them, and must have thrown some of it overboard. A large tin receptacle, commonly called a "kid," had been provided for each six men, and to settle the matter I told the Chief Steward to fill one of the kids and to bring it along, and the officer to bring six Chinamen. As soon as I saw the kid, overflowing with rice as it was, I said: "There are no six men in the world could eat that." I was mistaken—the Chinamen filled their little bowls, and with the aid of their chop-sticks shovelled it into their mouths. In about five minutes or less the kid was empty and the officer remarked: "They would eat another one if you mixed some vegetables with the rice." After that exhibition they were given as much as they wanted, and we had no further complaints. They would stuff themselves as full as they could hold and then lie on the decks almost naked and sleep off the effects. They would never drink cold water, so hot water had always to be on tap for their use.

Another instance of their powers of eating. Hotpots had been prepared for the stewards' midday meal, and six Chinamen managed to steal one and had got their fingers into it before it could be recovered. Then, of course, the stewards refused to eat it. As a punishment,

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the Chief Steward, by the aid of an interpreter, told the six they would have to finish it or goodness knows what was going to happen to them. They did—twenty-eight pounds of meat and potatoes, and, what was more, they polished the tin as bright as silver with pieces of bread that he gave them.

They were a cheery lot and kept their quarters as clean as a new pin. They trotted on board the ship out of the train that took eight days to bring them from Vancouver, during which time they had never been allowed to leave it, and they trotted out of the ship on to the Liverpool landing-stage, when we arrived there, as happy as possible. They wouldn't sleep in the hammocks—on the deck, on the tables, and even overhead in the racks where the kit-bags were usually stowed, but for some reason best known to themselves they couldn't be made to use the hammocks.

After making ten round trips to Halifax, and the supply of Canadian troops having slacked off, the *Olympic* was taken off the Transport Service. We took her to Belfast to await further orders, on January 12, 1917. My crew were then paid off, and after enjoying a certain amount of leave, Captain Thompson, my assistant, was appointed to command the *Afric* in our Australian service, and I was appointed to relieve the commanders in our New York service, for a voyage each, so that they could get a little rest.

We were not so successful separated as we had been when we were together, as Thompson's ship was sunk by a German submarine south of the Eddystone Lighthouse, when he was bound from Liverpool to Plymouth to embark his passengers for Australia. It was very tough luck for him, as he had received orders before leaving Liverpool not to pass the Eddystone without first communicating with one of our patrol boats. He arrived off the Eddystone at seven o'clock one evening, and cruised about looking for one till five next morning, when he was torpedoed.

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I sailed for New York in the *Celtic* on February 14, but only got as far as the Isle of Man when we ran into a newly laid minefield, and were unfortunate enough to hit something at about 9 A.M. next day. We did not know at first whether it was a mine or torpedo we had struck, but as no second explosion occurred, and no submarine was seen, concluded it was a mine. I looked over the side to see when to stop the engines, and then as I turned to walk amidships again I bumped into my servant Griffiths, who was holding an old shore overcoat and a bucko cap for me to put on instead of my uniform in case we had to take to the boats—most thoughtful of him. Not only he, but everyone else, was prepared to say that the Captain had gone down in the ship, providing she had sunk and the submarine wanted to take me prisoner.

On sounding the ship we found twenty-eight feet of water in the fore-peak and in No. 1 hold, which showed the explosion had taken place somewhere near the bulkhead that separated them. No. 2 hold was practically dry, so we, after shoring the bulkhead between Nos. 1 and 2 holds, decided to return at reduced speed to Liverpool and informed the authorities on shore by wireless to that effect.

We reached the Mersey safely, accompanied by an armed trawler which had turned up in answer to our message, and on letting go the port anchor, found that the cable did not run out, so we brought up with the starboard one.

A day or two later, when we put into dry-dock, we found that a hole 30 feet long by 20 feet deep had been blown in her side, and the cable in the port chain-locker had been shattered into many pieces by the force of the explosion.

A fortnight later, I sailed in the *Adriatic* for New York, and managed to make that voyage successfully, though on our return we were ordered into Milford Haven as mines had been found at the entrance to the Mersey.

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We had a number of passengers and a certain amount of specie on board, and though I made application to land them, I was ordered to keep them on board till the ship reached Liverpool. This did not appeal to the passengers. They saw no reason why their lives should be further risked at sea when there was a train service to take them to their destinations.

Telegrams were sent by some of them—Lord Russell and Mr. Wade, Agent-General for New South Wales, I think he was, in particular I remember—and a fuss was made generally. We landed them and the silver next day.

Another attempt was made to get to Liverpool after they had left us, but when we were off the Kish Light-vessel we were ordered back to Milford as Liverpool had been mined again.

We anchored about eleven o'clock, and I had just got to sleep when I was roused up by Captain Jones, who had been sent to take the ship to Liverpool, and had brought orders with him for me to rejoin the *Olympic* at Glasgow.

I arrived there on the evening of April 1, and stayed at the hotel till the 3rd as the weather was too bad for any communication with the ship by tender, where she was lying at anchor off Greenock.

On the 2nd about two thousand passengers, mostly women and children, as usual, had arrived at Greenock by special trains to embark for Halifax, and were stranded on shore waiting for the weather to moderate. Some few of them found accommodation in the hotels there and at Glasgow, but for the great majority emergency arrangements had to be made. The Town Hall was thrown open, and many of them spent an uncomfortable night there. Feeding them was a problem, too, as war rations were in vogue then. However, they managed somehow or other, and next day the weather was fine, and they all came

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off to the ship and soon settled down and forgot their troubles.

I found when I went off to the ship that six 6-inch guns had been mounted while she was at Belfast, and that my crew had been augmented by about forty Naval ratings in charge of a Mate Gunner.

At sundown the Red Ensign was lowered, and at 9 A.M. on April 4, 1917, the White Ensign was hoisted and she was duly commissioned as one of His Majesty's ships, though as a matter of fact no one ever seemed to know to what branch of the Naval forces she actually belonged.

She was popularly referred to as "H.M. Transport," and as we continued to carry on with the same kind of work as we had done under the Red Ensign, that was probably as good a name as any for her. But the name she ought to be called remained a source of puzzlement to some distinguished Naval officers with whom we had to do business. "What is she?" we were often asked.

We had a whole library of code books and other confidential books supplied to us, and luckily for me a Decoding Officer came with them. Hitherto we had only been supplied with one code book, and the only men who were supposed to have access to it were the Master and Chief Officer.

You "live and learn," and it was at this time that I learned that there were varying degrees of secrecy which somehow reminded me of the various names eggs are labelled. Some of the books were marked "Confidential," others "Secret," others "Very Secret," others "Most Secret," and others had instructions on them that only certain specified persons should see them. Very necessary for the Navy, no doubt, but to a man who had been brought up with practically all his instructions open to everybody on board, sufficiently appalling.

We lay comfortably at anchor at the Tail of the Bank for some days with all our people settled down, when one

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evening we received a telegram asking how much vacant accommodation we had on board. After consultation with the Conducting Officer, whose particular pigeon it was to see to the berthing of the people, we replied, "None." Later we received another message saying that one suite, so many 1st Class, and so many 2nd Class rooms must be vacated, and passengers occupying them were to be given the option of disembarking or doubling up with the others.

Next morning there was a hullabaloo, nobody wanted to disembark or to be doubled up, and the Conducting Officer's life became a misery. He appealed to my Purser to assist him, and, by the use of a great deal of tact and some persuasion, the necessary rooms were vacated.

Speculation became active throughout as to whom we were waiting for. Sir Robert Borden was in London at the time, and the consensus of opinion was that it would be he, and dire were the threats as to what they would do to him when he did arrive for delaying their departure. Some threatened to pull his hair, of which, as a matter of fact, he had plenty. Others said they would not vote for him at the next election. I came to the conclusion from the remarks that were passed that the Prime Minister of Canada was not shown quite the same deference that would be accorded on a like occasion to ours.

When I called at the Transport Office daily to see if any orders had come for us, whoever it was that we were waiting for was always referred to as "The Special Party" by the Transport Officer.

I had other reasons for going on shore too—I being the only one who was allowed that privilege—and that was to buy, through our agents, everything that could be bought of an edible nature in Glasgow to repair the deficit in the stores that we had on board, owing to the good healthy appetites of our two thousand passengers, to say nothing about the eight hundred members of my crew.

Judging from this experience and others when we were

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kept waiting with large numbers on board, I came to the conclusion that perhaps the Admiralty were under the impression that as a matter of course the large Atlantic liners had market-gardens, poultry and dairy farms on board. The food supply was always a source of anxiety at such times, but acting upon the generous instructions of our managers we always rose to the occasion.

One morning I received orders to weigh anchor at sundown and to proceed to Lough Swilly, arriving there at daybreak, to embark "The Special Party." We had just got our anchor up when a signal was made for us to anchor again and wait for further instructions as Lough Swilly had been found to be mined. The same thing happened the next day, and I began to think that the enemy knew more about "The Special Party" than we did.

The next evening we were preparing to get under way again when orders came that "The Special Party" would embark at our anchorage at 10 P.M., as the train they were travelling by to Larne to cross to Belfast en route to Lough Swilly had run into a snowdrift and had been diverted to Glasgow. A lucky snowstorm for us, and perhaps for them, who knows?

Nothing was said to our passengers about this, but they must have sensed it somehow, as a large number of them were in the vicinity of our gangway when the Right Honourable A. J. Balfour, at the head of the British Mission to the United States, walked on board.

Sir Robert Borden was forgotten, as the English statesman walked smilingly through cheering crowds of them to the suite of rooms that a bishop had vacated for him.

As I was conducting him to his quarters, he told me that the last time he had crossed the Atlantic was in 1875 in the White Star liner *Britannic*, and I had the pleasure of telling him that he was going out in another White Star Line steamer even if she had a more warlike appearance.

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The Officers' Mess on the *Olympic* then was not a very comfortable place. As the dining-saloon had been converted into a troop-deck, the restaurant, with all its lavish decorations covered with deal boards, was used for the purpose, and as many tables as possible were crowded into it. Whenever, therefore, we had people of importance, such as Mr. Balfour, travelling with us, we offered to serve their meals in their sitting-rooms. This was generally accepted. Eight could be accommodated, so that they could invite whom they liked to dine with them at any time.

Next morning two destroyers were sent out to sweep a special route for us—which laid far away from Lough Swilly, I may say—and during the afternoon Sir Ian Malcolm came up to my room to invite me to dine with Mr. Balfour. I told him that mess dress was forbidden during the war, and he answered that dress did not matter in the least, and on that understanding I accepted.

None of Mr. Balfour's immediate entourage was in evening dress, but Lord Cunliffe was resplendent, and Mr. Balfour, to ease the situation, said he had not been allowed to change.

A very pleasant dinner-party it was, and from the talk that went on one would never have known that there was a war in existence or that anybody had a care in the world. Mr. Balfour discussed farming in Scotland with Lord Cunliffe, and flower-growing, too, and explained to me that they both had agricultural interests there.

We sailed the following forenoon under escort of three destroyers, and had perfect weather in the Irish Sea. But when we were passing through Rathlin Sound the sea commenced to rise very rapidly; a short steep sea that did not affect the *Olympic*, but the destroyers were plunging into it up to their funnels. They soon requested to be allowed to part company, and as Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair happened to be on the bridge at the time, and

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we flew the White Ensign, I referred the matter to him, and he said: "Tell them to keep with us as long as they can."

It was very evident that they would go under if they kept at it for much longer, so after further reference to the Admiral, the required permission was granted. After they had eased down and were making better weather of it, I sent them a message, at the Admiral's request, to tell them to follow us at the best speed they could make in case of anything happening.

Later on that evening the wireless operator took in a message addressed to us by our ordinary Merchant Service Call Sign which we could not decipher, so, thinking that it might be for some member of the Mission, I sent it down to find out. Later the Admiral came up and told me they could not decipher it either, and suggested my answering it by asking in what code it had been sent. I ventured to disagree with him, and after a little discussion it was decided to keep our wireless quiet.

On arrival at Halifax, as they could not decode it on the Flagship, the message was cabled over textually to the Admiralty, and they couldn't make anything out of it either. The supposition that was in my mind at the first when we couldn't decode it—that it originated from some enemy submarine anxious to get our bearing from him—was thus more or less confirmed.

Another wireless story occurs to me. One morning when we went alongside the landing-stage at Liverpool to disembark our troops no one was allowed on board till the ship had been visited by some Medical Officer who had been specially sent from London.

He came up to my room and asked how many cases of spinal meningitis we had on board, and how many had died from it during the passage. "None have died," I replied, "and there are no cases on board that I know of." He evidently did not believe me, so I sent for the senior

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Medical Officer in charge of the troops and for the ship's Doctor.

While they were coming he told me that a message had been received at the War Office through the Crookhaven Wireless Station, I think it was, saying that we had had so many deaths and there were so many cases on board. I told him that such a message had never been sent from the ship, as all messages passed through my hands.

I don't think he believed that either, so I sent for the wireless operator, and told him to bring his book containing every message that he had sent.

When the Doctor came and said they had had no such cases and the wireless operator had shown his book, he was finally convinced and the disembarkation was allowed to take place.

Where the message originated from was never found out.

We arrived at Halifax in due course, and I went to report my arrival on board the Flagship, and was very kindly received by Admiral Sir Montague Browning, who was then Commander-in-Chief on that station.

He asked me what I was—was I one of his ships, or what? I told him that I did not exactly know, but that we were engaged in the same work that we had been doing on previous trips to Halifax under the Red Ensign, and that Captain Martin, Captain Superintendent of the Dockyard, had looked after us then, and perhaps if he continued to do so everything would go on as before.

He agreed, and told me that if ever I was in any difficulty I was to come to him for assistance.

He then asked me how I had got into the harbour, and I replied: "In the usual way; I had stopped for a pilot outside, and then came in and anchored."

"Did not they challenge you?" he asked, and I answered: "No, sir, and if they had I would not have been able to reply, as I have not been supplied with the chal-

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lenges and replies." He gave orders for these to be supplied to me for the return trip, and later I was given the official code by which I could find them out for myself.

I don't think he took into consideration when asking these questions that "The Old Reliable" was much better known at the signal station than H.M.S. *Olympic*.

We had the honour of taking out on our next voyage to Halifax the Italian Mission to the United States, headed by the Prince of Udine.

When I was presented to His Royal Highness before we sailed from Liverpool, I offered to have his meals served in the sitting-room which had been allotted to him. He said in reply that he would not like to give us so much trouble, and even after I had told him that it would be a pleasure rather than a trouble, he still adhered to his decision to take them in the Officers' Mess.

Admiral Sir Montague Browning met him on his arrival, and the Canadian authorities made special arrangements to take him and his party on to Washington as quickly as possible.

Senator Marconi, the benefactor of all sailor men by his discoveries and unceasing improvements in "wireless," was on the Prince's staff, and I remember with pleasure several talks I had with him while he was on board.

General Sir Sam Hughes returned to Canada with us after he had fallen out with the Canadian Cabinet and was about to cease to be a member of it. No special arrangements had been made for his reception on his arrival, and rumour said that he was a man who was partial to being received by bands of music and Reception Committees, so he disembarked in rather a disgruntled frame of mind. A bit later we heard of his dismissal. The last occasion on which I saw Sir Sam was some time later at Halifax, when he was walking in the funeral procession of a very old friend of his, and everybody remarked

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on his altered appearance. He looked a broken-down old man, nothing like the same well-set-up Sir Sam who had crossed with us on several occasions.

His friend, whose funeral it was, if I remember rightly, was the contractor who had built the camp at Val Cartier at the beginning of the war, and of whom an amusing story was told at that time. Sir Sam Hughes thought he ought to have military rank conferred on him, so that he could carry out his duties properly, and made him a Captain. Later, when Sir Sam was inspecting the camp during the progress of building he met his friend attired in a Colonel's uniform, and asked how he had got his promotion. "Well, Sam," he explained, "it was the only suit I could find that would fit me, so I bought it." Sir Sam confirmed his promotion on the spot.

Mr. Charles Schwab, of Bethlehem Steel fame, crossed with me several times during the war, and I remember one night at dinner, when Admiral Bullard and some other officers of the U.S. Navy were sitting at my table, the conversation turned on the subject of Income Tax in England and America (this was later on when the American troops were returning), and Mr. Schwab stated that he was taxed 92 per cent. of his income. Some of us said we would like to try to live on the remaining eight. He was a little vague in his explanations, when the Admiral chaffed him about it, so I concluded that he intended his statement to be taken with the proverbial grain of salt.

He gave an address to the troops one night during a concert on the subject of saving money, and I was told that his remarks gave rise to a lot of amusing comments from the men, such remarks as: "Give us something to save first," being freely passed.

Judge Mayer—not the U.S. Supreme Court Judge of the same name who waxed very indignant on one occasion when asked if he was any relation to the man of whom I am writing—but a "Judge" who made a good deal of

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money by chartering ships and sending them across in the early days of the war, crossed to Halifax with us. He was ushered on board with great ceremony at Liverpool by the Principal Transport Officer, who, I remember, was very much shocked by the friendliness of the reception the "Judge" got from the Purser and one or two of the stewards.

He was a cheery soul and told us many stories on the way over. One was of his having been given a destroyer to take him across the Channel when the Military authorities wouldn't grant him permission to go. I think he said it was either Mr. Lloyd George or Mr. Balfour who arranged that for him. Anyway, he gave us the impression by his talk that they were the only two gentlemen he would have any dealings with on our side of the Atlantic.

Another anecdote was that he had been asked to accompany a leading member of the legal profession to Barrow to settle a strike that had broken out at the ship-building yards there. On their arrival the men were all assembled and five minutes would have settled the business, he said, but lunch was ready and somebody suggested letting the men wait till after that had been disposed of. "I objected," he went on, "but the arbitrator agreed, so we had lunch. When we had finished there were not any men to arbitrate with, and we returned to London without doing anything."

While we were disembarking at Halifax, I remember him bouncing into C53—one of our sitting-rooms that we used as an office on such occasions—and exclaiming: "They say the power of prayer is great, but I say the power of money is greater. The darned steward had my luggage all mixed up when I went on the dock, but when I produced ten dollars it was all in the train in less than no time—no bother with Customs or anything."

One morning as we lay at anchor in Halifax harbour the

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Commander-in-Chief sent for me to go on board his Flagship, and when I got there told me that Mr. Balfour was going to return home in my ship. He then asked me what I thought would be the best thing to say to throw dust in the eyes of the public regarding his movements.

I had already heard rumours to the effect that a man-of-war was being fitted with extra accommodation at Montreal, and another one at Halifax, so as to be in readiness to embark the British Mission at whichever port was the most convenient for them, so my advice was to say nothing. He then told me that we would have to wait for some days with our troops on board, and the people on shore would probably guess unless some reason for the delay in our sailing was given. "Let them guess, sir," I said, "they won't know. We have often remained in harbour for days with our troops on board for one reason or another." It was decided to do this. The Commander-in-Chief went to Washington to accompany Mr. Balfour on his journey to Halifax, and days passed during which Mr. Balfour was employed making eloquent speeches of farewell at various places at which he stopped in Canada, while we remained peacefully lying at anchor.

My friends on shore kept asking me when Mr. Balfour was going to sail, and I told them that I hadn't the faintest idea as to when or whence he was to sail. I don't think I was believed, as some of them would follow up their questions by remarking, "He is saying good-bye all over the place, and you are waiting here; it is evident he is going with you." However, they never got the information they wanted.

The day came at last. At previous consultations that had been held in the office of the Captain Superintendent of the Dockyard, I was told the train would be stopped at the dockyard at six in the morning, and the members of the Mission would be taken off to the Flagship and remain there till dusk, when they would embark.

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What actually happened was that the train arrived two hours or so late, Mr. Balfour was taken on board a steam yacht and spent the day in Bedford Basin.

The remainder of the Mission came off to the *Olympic*, and after breakfast many of them went on shore to play golf, and I was afterwards called a liar by my friends on shore. Perhaps they didn't say it quite so plainly as that, but that is what I gathered they meant.

Mr. Balfour had evidently not enjoyed being marooned all day, as I don't think he showed the equanimity of mind for which he is famed when he came on board about 6 P.M. on June 2, 1917. In fact, I thought he showed signs of irritation while I was conducting him to his quarters. I was making some remark when he cut me short by saying: "Where's the Admiral?" I went to look for him. The yacht he had been on was called the *Warrior*, owned by Mr. A. Smith Cochrane, a very wealthy American gentleman, whose neutrality, like that of many other Americans, wealthy and otherwise, couldn't stand the strain of waiting for the late President Wilson to declare that "A state of War existed between the United States and Germany."

He lent his yacht to the British Government and commanded her himself, being given an honorary commission in our Naval Reserve for the purpose of doing so. She was armed, and later on in the war became our Flagship on the North American and West Indies Station. She was anchored in the Potomac River off Washington D.C., and no doubt many delicate problems were discussed on board of her.

Commander Cochrane, R.N.R., gave up command of her then, and later on crossed with me as a passenger to Halifax and New York.

On that voyage after we had landed the women and children and others at Halifax, he remained on board and was our only passenger. For some personal reason he did

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not wish his arrival at New York to become known, possibly because he wanted to avoid the attentions of the newspaper men, so when we were hailed from the immigration boat on our way up to dock and asked if we had any passengers, I replied, "Only one British Naval Officer." We were waved to proceed, and I think he was pleased with my answer.

A number of prominent Labour leaders, who had also been to the United States on a mission, returned with us on that voyage. Mr. J. H. Thomas was one of them. One morning he came up to see me, and during the course of conversation told me that he had had lunch with Mr. Balfour on the previous day, and had said to him: "You are the man, sir, who ought to take charge now. Everybody trusts you, and nobody trusts Lloyd George." Mr. Balfour said in reply that he was too old, and had been too long at the game, when he retorted: "You are not a bit too old, sir. You are too lazy." I don't remember him repeating what was said in reply to that, only that there was general laughter round the table.

On approaching the Irish land we were met by four American destroyers who had been sent to escort us in. This was the first occasion we had had Americans, and very keen on their job they were, though they had evidently not been told that our orders were not to use our wireless. We had been receiving messages from them for twenty-four hours or more before we sighted them, asking us for our position, course and speed. Neither had they been given our secret call sign, as they had used our Merchant Service signals.

We were busy arranging details of our zigzag course by signal with them, when the Admiral brought Mr. Balfour on the bridge to watch the operations, and said to me, "Mr. Balfour wishes to send a complimentary signal to the destroyers expressing his satisfaction at being escorted by them." "All right, sir," I replied, "as

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soon as we have made the necessary arrangements with them I will send it."

There was some delay in getting our signal through, and in consequence the Admiral got impatient and himself went on top of our wheelhouse from where the signals were being sent.

I was wondering why the signalman didn't report that he had got my signal through, when the Admiral came down, and smilingly said, "I have sent Mr. Balfour's message, and yours is now being sent."

I acted like the parrot—"thought a lot, but didn't say much," as we had the White Ensign flying astern, and he was my senior officer.

When we were disembarking at Liverpool, I was taking Mr. Balfour up to the Riverside Station, and was met by the Principal Transport Officer, who took charge of him. When I entered the station, Mr. Thomas caught sight of me, and came rushing up waving a telegram, and said: "They have made me a Privy Councillor. Why, it is better than being made a peer!"

I offered him my congratulations. I thought the honour was very well deserved, as from the few conversations I had had with him, I had come to the conclusion that he was a man of sound common sense. Several of the Members of Parliament who were accompanying Mr. Balfour had spoken in the same way to me about him during the passage over.

After they had all gone on shore Mr. Palmer, my Purser, told me that several members of the Mission, General Bridges notably, had expressed the opinion to him that I would receive the C.M.G. for my services in taking them over and back. I treated their remarks more as a token of their friendly feelings towards the ship than as being seriously meant. However, in due course, I received the notification that I had been appointed to receive that honour. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty

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also sent me a very kind letter expressing their approval of the services I had rendered.

The honours were shared by every member of my crew, as they, of course, in their different spheres, had done as much as I did to make Mr. Balfour's voyage a comfortable as well as a safe one.

We happened to be sailing from Halifax on the same day that His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, was leaving for home after completing his term as Governor-General of Canada. Some people were unkind enough to say that the *Olympic* was used as a decoy to attract any submarines that might be in the vicinity, so as to ensure his escape from their attentions. There was only one destroyer under the Commander-in-Chief's orders at Halifax, the *Grylse*, and she was only a converted fast pleasure cruising yacht. We sailed first, and I had orders not to stop to discharge my pilot outside, then came the *Grylse* to tackle any submarine that might be attracted by us, and lastly the *Calgarian*, an armed merchant cruiser, with his Royal Highness on board. There is no need for me to add that we all got outside in safety, and that the Duke arrived home in due course.

CHAPTER XIV

THE AMERICANS COME IN

IN December, 1917, the *Olympic* was detailed to go to New York to bring back American troops, and when we arrived there, we were asked by the embarkation officials to carry some two or three thousand more troops than we had been in the habit of doing—it had become a habit by this time. I objected for the reason that such a number could not be comfortably housed or fed on board, and therefore I considered they would not be landed in as good condition as those we had previously carried. With all due deference to the American authorities, I think in their anxiety to get large numbers of troops across in the shortest possible time, they over-crowded their ships, with the result that they didn't disembark in as fit a condition as, for instance, the troops we carried.

We arrived at New York on Christmas Day during a very "cold snap"—the Hudson River was frozen over so that no coal could be got across for some days; indeed, it was not until January 11 that we could be got ready for sea. This gave time for my objection to be considered, with the result that we sailed with our usual number of troops on board.

We found the American troops somewhat different from any others that we had carried. The Canadians were more like our own men, full of fun and devilment while they were on board, perhaps a little more so; but the Americans seemed to take life more seriously. You hardly heard a sound from them, and it seemed to us they were more like what one would imagine the old Crusaders were, grim and determined.

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We had the pleasure of taking over with us the eldest son of Mr. P. A. S. Franklin, the President of the International Mercantile Marine Company, of which the White Star Line forms a part. He was amongst the first to volunteer to join their Regular Army when the United States came into the war, in fact, if I remember rightly, he did not wait for that event to take place, but joined up as soon as he himself considered it likely that they would.

He was a fine upstanding youngster of about 6 ft. 3 ins., and I was puzzled as to why he had joined the Tank Corps, so one day when he came up to my room for a yarn, I asked him the reason for his doing so, and added, "I don't believe you could get into one, Jack."

His reply was characteristic of American youth. "Well," he said, "when I get back I don't want the Civil War veterans to tell me what I ought to have done. They hadn't any tanks."

It was a pleasure to me, too, as time went on, to carry parcels over to him, and to bring back news of his movements and well-being to his father and mother.

As they were disembarking I was walking down the stairway towards the gangway, and had to pass through the men, who were sitting on the stairs waiting their turn. I heard one man say to another :

"What did we come over for, Bill ? "

"To make the world safe for democracy," Bill replied.

"Yes, and for the freedom of small nations."

"All except Ireland," was Bill's comment to that.

On our next voyage we took Lord and Lady Reading over when he was appointed Ambassador at Washington.

When it was decided that he was to go he was given his choice of ships to cross in, and chose the *Olympic*. Later, when it was decided that we were to call at Halifax on our way to New York, he was told that the ship was going to Halifax. Naturally it did not occur to him that the ship would go on to New York afterwards. He asked

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if the ship could not land him at New York first, and it was so arranged.

When we were well out to sea our passengers grumbled about being taken to New York before being landed at Halifax, as it would have been so much easier, and less expensive, to have landed them first.

This distressed Lord Reading very much, especially as there were a number of Canadian officers on limited leave on board. He came up to my room one day, and told me of the misunderstanding that had arisen before he embarked, and asked me if I would call at Halifax first and then take him on to New York?

I explained that I had to proceed in accordance with my Sailing Orders, but I thought it might be arranged on our arrival for all officers on leave to disembark at New York and proceed to their destinations from there, so that their leave would not be curtailed.

This proposed arrangement satisfied everybody on board, and on our arrival, the United States immigration authorities very kindly consented to the passengers being landed at that port.

A day or so before we arrived at New York Lord Reading came up to my room again and said that we were feeding our people too well.

"No one at home can live as they do; not even the Prime Minister."

He told me then that Mr. Lloyd George, taking advantage of some holiday when Parliament was not sitting—Easter Monday, I think it was—had invited a number of people to breakfast with him at Downing Street, so that they could discuss some question in peace and quietness. He told his butler to prepare for them.

"You can't do it, sir, there's nothing in the house to eat," was the reply.

"Go out and buy a ham, or something," urged Mr. Lloyd George.

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The butler went, but there was nothing to be had. Lord Reading told me that it was a very scratch breakfast, and after it was over Mr. Lloyd George asked him apprehensively if he had had enough to eat.

In answer I told him that most of our passengers were convalescent soldiers and deserved everything that we could give them.

"Besides that, sir, we buy all our own stores at Halifax or New York, as the case may be, so that we don't rob England of anything. The authorities won't allow us to land any of our surplus stores there either, not even to transfer them to one of our own ships that may be outward bound and requires stores."

This explanation satisfied him, and he went on to ask me what the nautical opinion was of the decisions that had been given in several big shipping cases, in particular the "*Olympic-Hawke* Collision case," which had been fought right up to the House of Lords. He had appeared in that case for the Admiralty, and being on board the *Olympic* must have reminded him of it. I told him that the general opinion was that the "Admiralty must have had the better lawyer as they certainly hadn't the better case." He smiled, and asked me if I was in command of the *Olympic* then.

"No," I told him. "I only joined when she was taken for a transport."

On our next arrival at New York I was told by Commodore Wells, of London Fire Brigade fame, who was the representative of the Trade Division of the Admiralty there, that we were to have the honour of taking back with us Admiral Sir Montague Browning and his Staff, and that he would fly his flag as Commander-in-Chief of the North American and West Indies Station while he was on board. This was a distinction that I had never heard of a merchant ship having had before, so I wanted everything to go properly, and asked the Commodore

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exactly what it meant. He didn't seem to know, or at any rate he didn't venture to tell me.

The Admiral was then on his way up from Bermuda in H.M.S. *Carnarvon*, and as it was doubtful whether she would arrive before we were ready for sea, many were the messages that passed to and fro as to the hour we were to embark him when he did arrive. The main fact was that we were to wait for him.

Either our troops were delayed or the *Carnarvon* put on an extra burst of speed, as she arrived during the morning of the day that we were to sail.

The flag was still bothering me a little, so when the Admiral embarked I took an early opportunity of asking Captain Lowndes, his Flag-Captain, for exact information as to what it inferred.

"Does it mean that you take charge of the ship and I become a passenger?" was the way I put it to him. Very tactfully, I thought, he replied, "It doesn't mean anything beyond that everything goes on as usual and we are privileged passengers." Then I knew exactly what I had to do.

General Tasker H. Bliss, of the United States Army, was also a passenger on that trip, going over to take up the duties of Chief of Staff to General Pershing, I understood. He was a frequent guest of Sir Montague Browning, but otherwise kept very much to himself, walking miles a day on a narrow deck we had alongside the forward funnel, where nobody else ever went. Blow high, blow low, we would see him up there most of the day. Part of this deck formed the roof of my quarters, so I remember it very well indeed.

We arrived alongside the landing-stage at about seven o'clock one morning, and on my way down to breakfast I called on the Admiral to ask if every attention was being paid to him. "Yes, thank you," he replied, "but they don't seem to pay much attention to the arrival of a Com-

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mander-in-Chief at Liverpool. Nobody is here to meet me, and no arrangements have been made for me to get to London. However, a saloon carriage has been arranged for General Bliss, and he has very kindly offered me a seat in it, and his men are getting my baggage on shore for me." I then said: "I presume I will strike your flag as soon as you leave the ship, sir." "Oh, no!" he replied, "you will wait until you receive orders from the Admiralty to do that."

As this was a Saturday morning, it would be Monday before he could report at the Admiralty; his flag remained flying till the Tuesday, when I received orders from the Admiralty to strike it.

Quite a sensation was caused by our flying it for so long, but it was only afterwards I learned that by virtue of its being flown from my ship, I automatically became Senior Naval Officer of the port. What could I not have done had I known sooner?

I still have the flag as a valued memento of the occasion on which it was flown, though it was officially entered in our books as being "expended."

The following voyage we received our Sailing Orders, when homeward bound, for Liverpool. Dense fog prevailed as we were approaching the rendezvous, where we were to be met by our escort of American destroyers, when I received a message from the senior officer of it, reading, "Steer straight for your destination."

"Impossible," I sent in reply, "it would take me overland."

"Do you know where you are bound?" was the next message I received.

"Yes, to Liverpool."

"You are to proceed to Brest," was the answer I received. After getting this confirmed from the Admiral commanding the south coast of Ireland, I altered course as directed, and a short time afterwards we picked up our

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escort in the fog, which, I am glad to remember, cleared off before we had to enter the harbour of Brest.

The face of the boarding officer who boarded us in the uniform of a Lieutenant in United States Naval Reserve seemed familiar to me, but I couldn't quite place him. Later, in the course of conversation, it transpired that it was Commodore Tod, of the New York Yacht Club, who had travelled with me as a passenger in more peaceful days. He entertained the Purser and myself royally to lunch next day at a club on shore, which I learned he had inaugurated for the use of American officers stationed there.

We had many facetious interchanges of signals with our escorts. One, I remember, was with an American destroyer after we had rounded Holyhead, on our way to Liverpool. He had just dropped a depth charge which brought up the sand and stones from the bottom, and had thrown them up to a considerable height, when we noticed what looked like the periscope of a submarine just astern of him. We fired at it, and he signalled: "That was a piece of wood you fired at." To which I replied: "Yes, the same piece of wood you dropped a depth charge on."

Once when we were going up Channel we very nearly rammed a destroyer—he escaped by a matter of inches. When we got to the landing-stage we apologized to the senior officer, and he replied: "No need to apologize; it was his fault, he shouldn't have gone on the wrong zigzag."

On one occasion when I called at the U.S. Naval offices before sailing from New York, I was informed that we were to have an escort of one destroyer.

"Where would you like to have it placed?" I was asked by the Chief of Staff.

"Zigzagging across our bows, about half a mile or so ahead of us," I replied.

"I don't agree with you," he said, "I would rather

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have it under my stern if I were you; then if a submarine were to attack you he would be in the best position to deal with it."

"Yes," I said, "if we are to act as a decoy for him to hunt submarines, that is the best place, but if it is his business to protect us from submarines, his place is ahead."

I don't think he was quite serious in his arguments, as a good deal of friendly chaff used to go on during my visits to the office, but whether he was or not, the destroyer kept ahead when we got to sea.

I fancy that the Americans preferred small airships. "Blimps" they were called—we used them too, but not so much as they did—as a protection or means of keeping submarines away from a ship. I didn't like them. I found they distracted the attention of look-outs on board from their work, to look at them, and more often than not, when they were close to us, you would notice the glasses of the observer in them directed towards the ship rather than scanning the sea for signs of submarines.

Our twenty-second voyage carrying troops was the most adventurous that we had during the whole period of the war. We sailed from Southampton for New York on the night of April 24, 1918, and as there was no pilot boat on station we had to take our pilot, Mr. George Bowyer, on with us. We also had another involuntary passenger on board, Mr. Smith, who had been adjusting our compasses while we were lying at anchor in Stokes Bay waiting for the dark. We could not land him either for the same reason.

Next morning early the destroyer that was stationed on our starboard bow hoisted the "Submarines in Sight" signal, and we altered course away from him. Most of us on the bridge were on the starboard side watching the destroyer hunt the submarine. Then the Second Officer,

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Mr. Freeman, who was keeping a look-out on the other side, shouted: "Submarine on the port bow," and our course was again altered to bring him astern at the same time our guns opened fire on him. He had two periscopes, and if we had continued for another minute or so on the course we were on when he was first sighted, we would have run across his line of fire. However, we didn't, and though our shots were falling fairly close to his periscopes he remained with them showing, manœuvring for position to fire a torpedo at us. This was unusual, as generally whenever we saw a periscope it went under after our first shot at it. This fellow must have been keen on his job.

By our first alteration of course we had brought our three destroyers on to the starboard side, but the sound of our guns soon brought them back, and they raced for the spot where our shots were falling and dropped depth charges. Whether they succeeded in sinking the submarine we never found out. The first one reported by the destroyer had been a false alarm.

The noise of our guns going off very soon brought the pilot and compass adjuster on the bridge, showing signs of having dressed very hurriedly. I thought the former looked a little anxious, so I slapped him on the back and said: "You must not worry a bit, George; this is my birthday, and nothing is going to happen to-day."

When we reached the position in which the destroyers were to leave us about sundown, I made a signal to the senior officer asking him to take our involuntary passengers back to Southampton. He considered it was too risky to stop the ship, but, if we reduced to six knots and would drop them on a raft he would pick them up. This did not appeal to either of them, so we took them on to New York with us. A pleasant holiday for them.

On our return we met our escort of four American destroyers at the rendezvous, and they accompanied us

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into the English Channel, where they were to be relieved by four British destroyers at daylight on May 12.

The sky was as black as ink with the exception of a low streak of light, looking like silver, in the north-east as day was breaking, and we were keeping a good look-out for the British destroyers when a submarine came to the surface about one and a half points on our starboard bow, against the light, and about half a mile or so away.

I happened to be on the bridge at the time, standing on the starboard side, and saw it just as our look-outs reported it. There was only one thing to do, and that was to try to ram it, so I altered course to bring it ahead, and as I steadied the ship our forward gun fired at it, but the shot went over as the gun could not be sufficiently depressed. This seemed to wake him up, for until then he had apparently not seen us against the black background of the sky. He went full speed ahead on his engines—we could see the wash from his propellers—and tried to escape by turning inside our circle. We put our helm hard-a-port again, and at 3.55 A.M. hit him a swinging blow with our stem which put an end to his career.

We could hear our paravane chains being torn away as he passed along, and when the wreck got abreast of our bridge it was almost standing on end. I kept the helm hard-a-port till it was clear of our propellers and then resumed our course.

It was a thrilling moment in a way—we had got what we had been looking for ever since the submarine warfare commenced, but I don't remember being unduly excited. I turned to Captain Thompson, and after shaking hands, said: "Well, Thompson, there's forty of the brutes gone to hell, and you get a bit of your own back, and I get a little consolation for having my voyage in the *Celtic* interfered with."

As the wreck passed astern our after guns fired at it, or at something else, and made several hits, so I was told



THE *OLYMPIC* ON TRANSPORT SERVICE
Showing camouflage



THE *OLYMPIC* IN DRY DOCK AFTER RAMMING U 103
Note twisted stem

The Americans Come In

by some American military officers who happened to be on deck aft and saw what was going on.

The shock of the impact was much greater than I expected; somehow I had always thought of submarines as being frail things, but it jumped us off our feet on the bridge. I began to wonder whether it was not something heavier than a submarine we had rammed, and an uneasy feeling regarding the destroyers we were expecting to meet began to creep into my mind. I was absolutely certain that it was a submarine before we altered our course—we could see the conning-tower, and the hull awash, with a fair-sized gun placed forward and aft of the tower. Still the uneasy feeling remained till some time later when we intercepted a message sent from the U.S.T.B.D. *Davis* reading: "Have picked up seventeen survivors of the German submarine U103 sunk by gunfire from the *Olympic*." Later it transpired that four officers and twenty-seven men were picked up from her.

The firing of our gun awoke General Weigel, who was in command of the American troops we had on board, and he sent his A.D.C. to the bridge to find out what the fuss was about. Later, when we intercepted the message from the *Davis*, I sent one of my officers down with it to show it to the General. After reading it he remarked: "Hell! What did they want to pick up seventeen for? A pair of boots would have been enough."

The British destroyers turned up and relieved the Americans, and in due course we reached Southampton, anchoring first in Stokes Bay to wait for a suitable time for docking.

The Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, Admiral the Hon. Sir Stanley Colville, came on board with his Flag Captain and Lieutenant to congratulate me on the incident, and I must say that I felt a little embarrassed at having a fuss made over a thing that I considered was a perfectly obvious thing to do. To relieve my embarrassment I

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asked the Admiral if he would like to see General Weigel. He said he would, so I sent my compliments to the General and asked him to come to my room to meet the Commander-in-Chief. He came, smoking his cigar, and his breezy conversation soon relieved the situation so far as I was concerned.

I have never seen anything more neatly done than the way he unloaded a batch of cablegrams and letters on to the Admiral to be sent off without the delay of passing through the military censorship on shore. He did it without apparent effort, too, as if it was the most natural thing in the world for a Commander-in-Chief to act as postman.

After we were in our berth at Southampton I heard that two of the look-out men on watch at the time had a difference of opinion as to which of them first sighted the submarine. As the managers of the White Star Line gave a reward of twenty pounds to the man who first sighted any submarines from which any of their ships escaped, I thought I had better get the knotty point settled, so sent for the men concerned. The man on the stem-head said he had seen the submarine break surface and had shouted out—it was his voice I had heard.

The man in the starboard side of the look-out cage on the foremast stated he had seen the conning-tower come out of the water and had rung the telephone bell to the bridge.

"Why didn't you sing out?" I asked him.

"To tell you the truth, sir, I thought he would hear me and go under again," he replied.

"That was when you made a mistake," I said, "it was Bennett's voice I heard, and he gets the money."

As a matter of fact, I heard afterwards that Bennett shared with him when he received it.

A diver was sent down to examine our stem, and when he came up reported that it was twisted over to port for

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about eight feet and that there was a dent in several plates. A few days later we went into dry-dock, and everybody, Board of Trade surveyors and so on, who saw the damage that we had sustained said that nobody could have escaped from the submarine that we had rammed.

Captain Thompson from the first had said that there must have been two submarines, and those rescued were from the one that had been hit by our after guns, which, in a way, was borne out by the message that we intercepted from the *Davis* "sunk by gunfire from the *Olympic*."

Some time later, when the Captain of the *Davis* who had picked up the survivors was going out to New York with us along with some other U.S. destroyer officers to bring new destroyers over to British waters, Thompson argued the point with him.

The Captain of the *Davis* said that our shots went uncomfortably close to his destroyer. Well, the submarine that we rammed was not within half a mile of the *Davis* when we were firing, and I don't think our trained gunners made such bad shooting as that would imply, so that it looked as if there might have been something in what Thompson said.

On our arrival at Southampton, or shortly after, I asked Colonel Swalm, the United States Consul there, if he could get me a copy of the report of the inquiry that had taken place when the survivors landed, and Admiral Sims, at his instance, very kindly sent me one, with a characteristic remark on it in his own handwriting: "You did a fine stunt. Cheer up. W. S. Sims." The Captain of the *U103* was amongst the survivors, and he had stated that he was preparing to attack us with two torpedoes when we opened fire on him. He then submerged to twenty metres, and as we passed him the tip of one of our propellers pierced his side and he had to come to the surface to save his crew, eight or nine of whom were drowned.

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At the time I did not treat Captain Thompson's contention seriously, so never raised the question as to whether there were one or two, and even when I read the report of the German Captain I thought that it was made more for home consumption than anywhere else, for what he ought to have done was to "submerge to save himself" had his submarine been in the position of the one we rammed when we first sighted him.

What would have happened had we claimed to have sunk two submarines and our claim had been established I don't know. As it was, I received many letters of congratulation on the subject—from our managers and directors, from Mr. Ismay, under whom I have always considered I have been brought up, cablegrams from New York, from Lord Long, and many others too numerous to mention. But I think the one I was most touched by, on account of a few words it contained, was from Admiral Lord Jellicoe. He had left the Admiralty then, so didn't hear of it at the time, but wrote me a letter when he did hear of it.

The D.S.O. was awarded to me, and when His Majesty the King presented it he was very interested in the story, and asked me many questions regarding what happened. What pleased me as much as anything was that the D.C.M. was given to Bennett, the look-out man who first reported the submarine. When I gave it to him, with a few more or less appropriate words, in the presence of his shipmates, he said: "I value this, sir, more than the money I got."

The managers and directors of the White Star Line gave me a very handsome cheque, and when I was before the committee I really had a hard task to prevent them scattering all the profits of the shareholders in presents amongst the members of my crew. As it was, all those who by any stretch of the imagination could have been thought to have been concerned in it fared handsomely.

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The Admiralty sent a cheque for a thousand pounds, and the Committee of Lloyds sent a similar one to be distributed amongst the ship's company, so, all things considered, I came to the conclusion that the sinking of a submarine was a very expensive business for those not concerned in it, and a very trying one in its after effects for him who was. Answering letters of congratulations was not my strong point, though I felt very grateful to those who had so kindly written them.

The officers of one of the regiments on board collected a sum of money and gave it to the Purser for the purpose of putting a tablet somewhere on the ship to commemorate the event. Later, when the ship was being reconditioned at Belfast after the war, it was placed in position on one of the landings of the main companion-way. The inscription on it reads :

This tablet, presented by the 59th Regiment
United States Infantry, commemorates the sinking
of the German Submarine U103 by the *Olympic*
on 12th May, 1918, in lat. 49° 16 N. long. 4° 51
on the voyage from New York to Southampton
with American Troops.

I think that one of the great tragedies of the war was that Doctor Walter Hines Page, the United States Ambassador, was not spared in health and strength to see the end of it and to take his part in the settlement. His strength of character, sound judgment and, above all, his broad human outlook would have been of inestimable value at that time, and I feel sure the world would have been a better place to live in now had he been spared.

I had the privilege in October, 1918, of taking him back to his own country, stricken in health and worn out by his work for the allied cause. It is not for me to write of what he did—his "Life and Letters," by Mr. Burton Hendrick, gives the world an insight into that—but I can

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testify to the wonderful patience shown by him on board my ship, when he must have known that his end was near.

Mrs. Page and Major Page, their son, accompanied the Ambassador, and there were several ladies as well as a doctor and two nurses in their party.

He lost strength for the first day or two we were at sea, and the medical officer who had the care of him must have felt the responsibility that rested on him, as he asked the ship's Surgeon, Dr. Hope, to consult with him. Between them they evolved some treatment under which his condition improved, and on our arrival at New York he was taken to St. Luke's Hospital, where arrangements for his reception had been made by wireless from the ship.

One afternoon before we arrived Mrs. Page gave me a bound copy of an address delivered by the Ambassador at Plymouth on the occasion of the tercentenary of the sailing of the Pilgrim Fathers, which I shall always treasure, especially as she told me his signature in it was amongst the last he ever wrote.

Later she also very kindly presented a beautiful silver bowl to the ship, inscribed :

To
His Majesty's Transport *Olympic*,
CAPTAIN BERTRAM HAYES, R.N.R., D.S.O.
In grateful appreciation from :
The American Ambassador
and
Mrs. Walter Hines Page.
October, 1918.

It was a source of gratification—thankfulness, I might say—to us all when we learned that his Excellency had reached the home he had so long been looking forward to reaching.

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We were outward bound to New York when the Armistice was "in the air," literally, as of course all news came to us by wireless.

We had a number of American Naval officers on board who thought it was coming a little too quickly to suit their purpose, as they were going over to bring back new destroyers. About five of them were up in my room one morning as we were nearing New York, when a message was handed to me of a very favourable nature from my point of view, for I had had quite enough of going to sea in war-time. When I had read it to them they commenced a discussion amongst themselves, and eventually came to the conclusion that it would be quite in order for the war to end, as they had been over, the submarine menace had been overcome, so really there was no necessity for them to return. I understood exactly what was in their minds when they reached their decision, but I thought that if some of the kind friends who were trying to sow discord between the two countries had been present, their remarks might have been misunderstood, and a new peg formed on which to hang their foolish arguments.

We docked too late on November 10, 1918, for arrangements to be made to land all our passengers, and the "women and children" were told to remain until next morning.

I went up to my good friends Mr. and Mrs. Vickers' apartment to stay the night, preparatory to going out to their country place, to recuperate after the voyage.

Next morning I was the first up, and as their newspapers had not been delivered as usual, I went out to get one. The first person I saw in the street was an elderly gentleman with a paper American flag round his hat towing a cow-bell at the end of a string with one hand, and a dog all covered with bows of red, white and blue ribbons with the other. The dog, too, had a cow-bell attached to him. I felt sure he was a lunatic, so gave him a wide

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berth, but when I got the newspaper I soon found the cause of his trouble. The Armistice had been signed, and I hurried back to inform my friends.

New York wasn't a safe place for anybody in uniform to be about in on that day, especially anyone who wore a foreign one. I heard of many men who had been hugged and kissed by girls whether they liked it or not, though I suspect that most of them did. I suppose I must have looked too severe for such an experience to come my way, though I remember being "threatened" when I was approaching our office after entering the ship at the Custom House. I held up a warning finger, and was up the steps before they could definitely make up their minds, and they went laughingly away.

Some kind friend offered me a car to drive up-town again, which I declined, saying that I would rather go over the heads of the rejoicing crowds in the "Elevated" than try to force my way through them.

On the ship my servant Griffiths was apparently the first one to hear of the Armistice, and felt it incumbent on him to represent me in my absence. I was told afterwards that he had put on one of my old uniform coats, sea-boots and sou'-wester, had adorned himself with a false beard, and after providing himself with a bottle of whisky he waked each officer in turn, and invited them to drink either the successful termination of the war, or my health, nobody seemed to remember which. He afterwards addressed the crew who had come forward to give expression to their joy.

There were several of our ships in port at the time, and most of the members of their crews mustered on our pier, and, headed by our fou-fou band, marched up and down West Street for some time, while the passengers on board looked after themselves, which they very good-naturedly did.

CHAPTER XV

AFTER THE ARMISTICE

IT was decided not to send any more troops across, so we sailed for Southampton with very few people on board. It seemed strange to be at sea again, with all our lights burning after so many years of steaming with the ship in absolute darkness, so far as anyone could see from outside. It was evident that the granting of the Armistice to the Germans didn't necessarily mean that there was Peace, as an escort of destroyers met us as usual when we were approaching the English Channel, though that was the last time we had any. We were allowed to steer straight courses instead of zigzagging, which was a relief.

Our Naval Intelligence Service must have had trustworthy sources of information during the war, as they seemed to know where every submarine was located. I have heard it said by more or less responsible people, that it was Admiral Von Tirpitz himself who was giving us the information, and I have also heard speculations as to how much he was paid for doing so. Whether he was the source or not, the fact remains that the information was accurate.

Certain positions at the entrance of the English Channel were designated by letters, and were always referred to by their particular letter in wireless messages that we received, and also in our Sailing Orders. We would be ordered to pass through a certain letter before shaping our course to the westward, and on several occasions the position was altered by wireless after we had sailed, no doubt owing to information that had reached

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the Admiralty subsequent to our departure. Several times we took in S O S messages from steamers that had been torpedoed in almost the exact position we would have been in at the time, had we continued in accordance with our original Sailing Orders.

An American Naval officer who travelled out to New York in the *Olympic* told me that he had seen a copy of the actual Sailing Orders that had been issued to the two German submarines sent out to harass shipping on the American coast. The proof that they were correct was established when one of them sank a schooner some considerable distance from the coast on the afternoon of the day before our Admiralty had informed the United States authorities one of them would arrive off the Chesapeake. He said the other had orders to cruise between Cape Cod and Nova Scotia. She laid mines off Halifax lightship.

It seemed only natural to us that the first of the victorious troops we were to take back to their homeland should be Canadians.

The reception they met with on their arrival at Halifax I will never forget. The scene was simply indescribable. Every ship in the harbour, moving or stationary, was decked with flags, and everyone of them kept their whistles blowing all the time we were in sight of them. The ends of the piers we passed on our way up town were crowded with people who added to the noise by their shouts of welcome. Banners of welcome were stretched along the sheds, and perhaps what touched me most was that our ship was not forgotten in the general welcome to the troops. "Welcome to the Old Reliable" was prominently displayed. In addition to the crowds of people on our pier there were three bands of music, wind instruments predominating, and all blowing their hardest, at different tunes, I should say, by the noise they made.

The human voice, even when aided by the megaphone, was no use in giving orders as we were docking, so we

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had to do it by signs, and when we got the ship into her berth the Ladies' Committee took charge of the troops, and pressed food and dainties upon them as though they were under the impression they had just come out of the trenches instead of landing from a ship where they had been well fed for a week or so. When the pilot boarded us outside, he handed me a letter from the secretary to the Halifax Board of Trade, inviting me to attend a meeting at noon on the following day, for the purpose of receiving a presentation from them.

After we were in our berth the Mayor and City Clerk came on board and invited me to attend at the City Hall next day to receive an address and a piece of plate from the City of Halifax.

The Mayor, if I may say so, had the reputation of being a gentleman who preferred to run the city without the assistance of a City Council, and some of my friends had told me that they had all resigned in consequence of this peculiarity. He had made up his mind (also on the authority of my friend) "to get ahead" of the Board of Trade in recognizing the association of the *Olympic* with the port of Halifax, and the Board of Trade had also made up their minds that he should not, hence their invitation being sent off by the pilot.

I was placed in somewhat of a quandary, and explained to the Mayor that I had already accepted the invitation to attend at the Board of Trade. "What time did they invite you for?" he asked. I replied: "At noon." "Then come to the City Hall at eleven. We won't keep you long, and you will have plenty of time to keep your other engagement," he said.

I was deeply sensible of the honour they wished to confer on me, as representing the ship, so accepted both invitations and spent a busy morning.

The Illuminated Address referred in felicitous terms to the good work done by the whole of the Merchant Ser-

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vice during the war, and that gave me an opportunity in my reply to bear tribute to the heroism displayed by the men in the slower ships of that Service. We, in the fast ships, had a chance to escape from the attentions of the submarines if we were fortunate enough to catch sight of them, while they had little or none, as in many cases—most cases, I might say—the submarines had the advantage of speed either when travelling on the surface or under water. Yet the men were willing and eager to get to sea again after the ships they were in had been torpedoed.

The inscription on the silver salver that accompanied the address was—under the arms of the City :

To

CAPTAIN BERTRAM HAYES, R.N.R., C.M.G., D.S.O.,
from

The City of Halifax

In recognition of his services as Commander of
H.M. Transport *Olympic*
during the World War.
December 16th, 1918.

Halifax, I am almost sure, was the only city to recognize the services of the Merchant Service during the war by a public presentation, and I venture to think her citizens may well be as proud of that fact, as I was to be the representative of that Service to receive it.

The members of the Halifax Board of Trade were all my friends, and their presentation was of a more personal nature. It took the form of a large silver loving cup, and some member who was present suggested that it ought to have been filled with champagne and passed round before being presented to me, but it couldn't be done, in public, at any rate, as Halifax was a "dry town," though only "in spots," I found out during the pleasant days I spent there.

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The arms of Halifax were engraved on one panel;
on another :

Presented to
CAPTAIN BERTRAM FOX HAYES, C.M.G., D.S.O.,
H.M.S. *Olympic*,
from
The Halifax Board of Trade.
16th December, 1918.

and on the third :

In recognition of very distinguished services
during the Great War, and to commemorate the
close association of himself and his ship during
that period with the Port of Halifax.

Enough to make any man blush, especially when accompanied by the very flattering remarks of the Chairman of the Board. However, my embarrassment was somewhat relieved by the general laughter that followed Lieut.-Governor Grant's efforts to make me accept the silver tea service the Board of Trade also very kindly gave to my Chief Engineer, Mr. Ferguson, after he had presented the loving cup to me.

In February, 1919, the *Olympic* resumed her peaceful garb. The White Ensign was lowered one evening at sunset, and next morning the Red hoisted in its place.

Our managers celebrated the event by having a luncheon on board, to which were invited the various Naval and Military officials at Liverpool who had been connected with the port during the war, together with a number of prominent people belonging to Liverpool.

The histories of the *Olympic*, and the various other steamers of the White Star Line were recalled in the eloquent speeches that followed the luncheon—the number of troops they had carried; the amount of munitions, and food-stuffs they had brought over; how many ships we

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had lost through enemy action and the various activities of the company in connexion with the war.

Admiral Stileman, who was the senior Naval officer present, referred in his speech to a dinge that had been discovered fourteen feet or so below the water-line, in the side of the *Olympic*, when we were in dry dock a few days previous to the lunch. He said that it might have been caused by a submarine, travelling under water, colliding end on with the ship, and that in all probability that had been the finish of it, and that the sinking of another submarine ought to be added to the laurels of the *Olympic*.

With all due deference to the Admiral, I think that the dinge was caused by a dud torpedo striking the ship, and that instead of an added laurel she might have been credited with the luckiest escape of the war.

When the ship went into dry dock and had been placed in position for pumping out the water, we all went down to lunch in the Officers' Mess while waiting for the dock to be emptied, so that we could examine her bottom.

Our manager was the first to finish his lunch and left to return to the office. In a very few minutes he came back to say that water was pouring out of her side. This seemed incredible to me, and I thought the water must have been running through some pipe. He insisted, however, that it was coming through one of the plates, so I went with him to find out what the trouble was, and sure enough he was right.

The *Olympic*, some time previous to the war, had been fitted with an inner skin for the whole length of the engine and boiler rooms. The space between it and the hull was divided into small compartments, and it was from one of these that the water was running. There was a dinge in her hull about eighteen inches or so in diameter, with a crack about six inches long, in the centre of it.

On closer examination, when the dock was dry and a stage had been rigged, it looked to me that whatever had

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caused the damage had been travelling at a high rate of speed, and had rebounded, as there were no scratches on the paint round the dinge, and that to my mind indicated that she had been hit by a torpedo which had not exploded. If so, it had been a very good shot, as it was right amidships between the second and third funnels.

The Admiral sent his expert adviser down to the ship, and it was he who advanced the theory referred to in the Admiral's speech, but if a submarine had run into us our paint would have been scored on the after side of the dinge. I don't think there can be any question about that.

On talking the matter over with my officers, we remembered an occasion when we were coming up Channel some voyages previous to the dry-docking, and before the Armistice, when the baggage was being got on deck ready for landing on our arrival. The men who were down the hold working came rushing up on deck thinking the ship had been struck by a torpedo, and when they found no excitement going on had returned to their work.

The compartments between the hull of the ship and the inner skin were not provided with any means of finding out if water got into them, so it may have been there for some time without our knowing anything about it.

We embarked a few nurses and some American troops at Liverpool on our next voyage, and sailed for Brest to complete our complement. Those we embarked at Brest were coloured troops, which was a new experience for us, and an amusing one. They were officered by coloured men up to the rank of Captain, the senior officers being white. I don't think the men liked being ordered about by men of their own race, though they showed no open disrespect. The coloured officers, on the other hand, seemed to enjoy being in a position of authority and were keen on exercising it, which led to some funny incidents on board.

There were two sentries stationed on the boat-deck,

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just abaft the bridge, and one of them was heard to remark to the other after the officer had passed on his rounds and put them through their facings: "Golly, I hope I don't meet mah officer after I get into civvies."

"What for not?" replied the other.

"'Cos if I do I'll beat him up," he answered.

On another occasion when we had got off soundings and had slowed the ship down to take our paravanes in, after we had resumed full speed one of them said to the Officer of the Watch: "Did the ship stop then, boss?" and on receiving the answer: "Yes," he asked: "What for, boss, was it to take breff?" He had evidently been impressed by her speed.

One day when we were pitching into a head sea, one of them was very sea-sick, and he was heard saying: "Good Lord, if you can't help this poor nigger you might bring this sea to attention."

A big, hefty soldier was caught by an officer smoking below decks, which was against the regulations. The officer put him in charge of the nearest sentry who happened to be a very small man. He first looked at the culprit, and said to the officer: "Say, boss, does you all expect me to look after this great big man?"

"Yes," said the officer, and walked away. The prisoner then looked down at the sentry and said: "What is you going to do if I runs away?" "Nuffin'," replied the sentry, so it was perhaps—for the sentry—as well that the guard came along to take the prisoner before he made up his mind to carry out his intention.

When we were docking at New York they all got very excited and crowded on to the side of the ship, next to the pier. Their weight gave the ship, in her light condition, such a list that we had to suspend operations until their officers could persuade them to trim ship, otherwise we would have carried away the shed in getting into our berth.

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About this time, I began to wonder what I could give to the crew who had sailed under me during the war in the *Olympic* as a memento of our long association together, and eventually decided to have a photograph taken on the deck of those who had been in her all the time, and present a signed copy to each of them. There had been a certain number of changes during the four years we had been running as a transport, but the bulk of my crew had kept together.

The eventful morning that the group was to be taken arrived, the crew were all dressed in their very best clothes, and the photographers came off to the ship. Then the wrangle commenced, some had missed one voyage, through sickness or something of the kind, others had missed more, and some of them had only joined after our Mediterranean experiences were over. I was appealed to, to decide whether this one or that should be in or out of the group, so that I began to think the idea was not so good as it appeared when I first thought of it. However, after a time everything was amicably settled and the photograph was taken, and everybody was pleased—at least, I know I was—when it was all over and done with. Other photographs were taken, groups of officers, engineers, and so on, the last one being of Mr. Mead, the ship's Storekeeper, and myself. He had sailed under me as Assistant Storekeeper in the old *Britannic* during the South African War, and off and on in various ships since that time.

On one of our later voyages to Halifax we had the honour of taking the Duchess of Devonshire out with us to join His Excellency the Governor-General. I knew she would be interested to witness the scenes of welcome on our arrival, and as there was no possible chance of her doing so from the decks on account of the crowding of the troops to the side of the ship next to Halifax, I asked Mr. Franklin and Mr. E. C. Grenfell, who were

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also on board, to invite her to come on the bridge, as we were going up the harbour so that she would get a good view.

She came up, and thoroughly enjoyed herself, and I venture to say that she was just as much excited as anybody else was.

Having already described one scene of arrival, there is no need for me to go into details as to what it was Her Grace saw. The welcomes were always of the same heartiness, perhaps a little more so when we happened to have Nova Scotian troops on board, and, of course, "The Old Reliable" was always treated as one of the family.

When I left the *Adriatic* to join the *Olympic*, the officers and engineers gave me a very fine gold wrist-watch as a parting gift, inscribed, "From the Officers, Deck and Engine Departments of the R.M.S. *Adriatic* to their Commander and friend, B. F. Hayes, R.D., R.N.R., Sept. 15th, 1915," and the members of the Victualling Department presented me with a very beautiful set of silver flower vases as a mark of their "esteem and affection." I valued these tokens of their esteem more than I can say, and wore the watch all through the war, but left the vases at home in case of accidents.

One morning when we were lying at anchor in Halifax harbour I was finishing my breakfast, when the Chief Steward came to me and said, "The men would like to see you in the smoke-room when you have finished your breakfast." "What is the trouble now?" I asked. "I don't know, sir," he replied, "I suppose they have some grievance or other." I told him to tell them I would be up in ten minutes or so, and on entering the smoke-room said, "What is the trouble now, men?"

The Chief Steward, Mr. Stanyer, then commenced to make a speech extolling my virtues, and after he had finished handed me a heavy gold cigarette case, which

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must have cost them a small fortune, inscribed, "To Bertram Fox Hayes, C.M.G., D.S.O., R.D., Capt. R.N.R., as a token of appreciation and affection from the members of the Vict. Department, H.M.S. *Olympic*, who served under him during the years 1915-1919."

Coming up, as I had, expecting some difficulty to settle, I was utterly taken aback, and all I could think of to say beyond a bald "Thank you, men," was to go for them for spending so much of their hard-earned money on me.

The only time that I have ever felt nervous of being robbed was that same evening, when I took the case on shore to show to some of my friends with whom I was dining.

After we had made a few more voyages with troops we said good-bye to Halifax and the many good friends we had made there, and on our return to Liverpool in August, 1919, we took the *Olympic* over to her builders, Messrs. Harland & Wolff, at Belfast, to be re-conditioned. It was decided to take advantage of this opportunity to have her converted from a coal to an oil burner, another instance of the White Star Line moving with the times, or rather, a little ahead of them, as she was the first of the large passenger steamers to be so converted.

I was sorry, in a way, as I have always had a "soft spot" for the firemen who had sailed under me in the several ships I have commanded. Their lot was a hard one. Sometimes in port, especially on a sailing day, they gave a certain amount of trouble, but once we got to sea their whole heart was in their work, and if there was ever a ship sighted ahead, or we were in company with another ship of the same approximate speed, they would never rest satisfied till they had passed her, or had almost worn themselves out in their efforts to do so. Many times, especially in the old *Majestic* and *Teutonic*, I have known them voluntarily go down below when it was their watch

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off duty to assist the watch who perhaps might be short-handed through some of their number being sick.

After a rest at home for a month or so I asked for leave to go out to New York to stay with my friends the Vickers at their country place at Newfoundland, New Jersey. Our managers very kindly granted me a free passage out and home, and I sailed in the *Celtic* on my first trip across the Atlantic as a passenger. I found there were a number of Canadian officers and nurses on board, and I had a very good time going over. They kept me busy acting as judge or starter nearly every day at the sports they got up to while away the time, and they even pressed me into taking the chair at the concert in aid of the seamen's charities.

The Vickers and I had often talked of the work we were going to do when I got the opportunity to pay them an extended visit. There were the woods round the house to thin, paths to be made through them, stone walls to be built, and many other pleasant chores to be done at Pine Top, which the two or three days nearly every time my ship was in New York that I spent with them had not given me sufficient time to dispose of.

I was not to be left undisturbed for long, however. The newspaper men had heralded my arrival, and had announced, on whose authority I don't know, that I was going to spend my "vacation" on "my farm" at Newfoundland, New Jersey.

The morning after I got there was heavy with clouds and rain fell at intervals. I was upstairs with a suit of overalls on, painting a bed out on the sleeping-porch, when the maid came to tell me that a gentleman from New York had called to see me. I told her to ask his name and business, and when she returned with a card from some Photo-Press Agency, I told her to tell him I was much too busy to see anyone. Mrs. Vickers, who by this time had found out that he was a returned soldier suffering

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from shell-shock or something, came up and worked on my feelings so much that I went down to interview him.

He said he had been sent out specially by his firm to take photographs of me on my farm, ploughing, milking, scratching the pigs and doing various other things of an agricultural nature that they thought the public would be interested in. I told him his firm was under a misapprehension, as I had no farm and had never done any of the things he mentioned. I was simply staying with friends, and that he could go back to New York to tell them so.

Mrs. Vickers pointed out that the photographer would lose a day's work if I did not consent as there was no train back to New York till 6 P.M. I had to give in. He took about twenty photographs of me about the place, but, thank goodness, only one of them turned out sufficiently well to be published. I think it must have appeared in every illustrated paper on both sides of the Atlantic. Wherever I went for a long time afterwards somebody was sure to produce it and ask the same question, "Have you seen this?" In the photograph I was wheeling a barrow full of logs to the house for use in the fireplace. I am chaffed about it even yet.

Next day I received a telegram from the secretary of the Canadian Club at Toronto inviting me to tell the *Olympic's* story during the war at one of their luncheons on some day convenient to myself. He concluded, "Letter following." I waited for the letter, and then replied that I had never made a speech in my life, that I was full of engagements for the rest of my leave, and could not entertain his proposal.

This did not satisfy him, as he returned to the charge, saying that they didn't want a speech, only a talk about the *Olympic*. After a number of letters of insistence on his part and protestation on mine, I went to New York to ask Mr. Franklin what he thought about it. He ad-

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vised me to go. So I consented, providing the secretary would take all responsibility in case my efforts were not a success. He wired back to come, and a date was fixed.

While this was going on I received a number of telegrams from my friends at Halifax congratulating me on the knighthood that had been conferred on me.

I knew nothing about it, and couldn't understand what they meant till a cable arrived from our chairman and managers, who were at Belfast, acquainting me with the fact that I had been made K.C.M.G., and offering me their hearty congratulations "in which Harland & Wolff's people join."

I was simply dumbfounded for a time, and didn't know quite what to do, till I somehow realized that the honour was really conferred on the Merchant Service as a whole, and that I was only the one chosen to be the recipient of it. It was in that spirit I decided to accept it.

On my arrival at Toronto I saw a man in the red-coated uniform of the King Edward Hotel coming down the platform calling "Sir Bertram Hayes"—the first time I had ever heard myself called by that name, and if I had not been accompanied by Mr. Thorley, the manager of our Toronto office, who had got up at some ungodly hour in order very kindly to meet me at the station where the train had previously stopped, I would have walked past him and taken a taxi to the hotel.

The Mayor of Toronto, Mr. "Tommy" Church, whom I had previously met at Halifax when Toronto troops were embarking on the *Olympic*, had also invited me to attend at the City Hall at eleven o'clock, saying that the Canadian Club were in agreement with my doing so, and I had accepted his invitation.

After breakfast I went to our office and found a bevy of newspaper men waiting for me, who asked me for a copy of the address I was going to deliver, so that they could have their reports ready for the evening papers.



THE SIMPLE LIFE

Sir Bertram Hayes poses for the New York Press Photographer
(Photographs by Underwood and Underwood.)

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I hadn't one, only a few headings to remind me of stories. I told them I was trusting to luck and the inspiration of the moment for what I had to say.

Mr. Thorley piloted me to the City Hall at the appointed hour, where I was received by the Mayor and a few others, who then informed me that I was to be presented with a silver loving cup, inscribed, "To Sir Bertram Hayes, Captain H.M.S. *Olympic*, on behalf of the Citizens of Toronto, Canada, T. L. Church, Mayor, October 8th, 1919."

I felt very much embarrassed while the Mayor was passing his eulogistic remarks about me and the *Olympic*, and in my reply, not being a practised speaker, made use of a phrase which the reporters who were present misunderstood. I referred to the occasion as a "little one," of course meaning in the annals of Toronto. They reported it as if I meant it was "a little occasion" in my life. As a matter of fact, it was a memorable moment for me, and, judging from the hearty hand-shakes I received from the concourse of people who honoured me with their presence at the ceremony, I am sure they understood what I meant. The cordiality of their reception of me heartened me for the ordeal I had to go through later.

The photographers were busy as we came out, and we had to pose for them on the steps of the City Hall. On looking through the papers on my way back to New York I found that Toronto had not only presented me with a loving cup but also with a wife—another man's at that—as the caption under one of the pictures read, "Sir Bertram and Lady Hayes leaving the City Hall."

Mrs. Thorley had happened to be standing next to me when the photograph was taken, hence the reporter's mistake. I will say this for him though: he had picked out a very charming lady for me while he was about it.

I found that the Canadian Club was not a club in the ordinary sense of the word, but a gathering of business

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men who lunched together at stated intervals in the Banqueting Hall at the King Edward Hotel, when the secretary arranged for some more or less celebrated people to address them.

If I might be permitted to give a little advice to the secretary, it would be that when he sends an invitation to "the less," such as I, he would be well advised not to send a list of "the more" with the invitation, as, in my case, reading such names as the late Lord Bryce, Lord Reading, Sir Robert Borden and others amongst those who had previously addressed the club, did not tend to make me any the more willing to risk the experiment of speaking to them.

The lunch was all laid out when we entered the hall, and the principal of the college at Toronto, who was in the chair, told me that the whole thing would be over in an hour. This bucked me up a little, as I thought that by the time lunch was over and he had made his introductory remarks there would be very little time left for me to talk.

But things didn't turn out quite like that. We commenced our lunch a quarter of an hour or so early, and that was quickly disposed of. The chairman only used about ten words in telling them that I didn't need any introduction to them. As he sat down he remarked to me, "You have fifty minutes." "Good Lord," I said, "I don't suppose I will last five." He did not waste any time trying to reassure me, but said, "I will put a piece of paper in front of you when you have only ten minutes left."

I got up and told them of my inexperience in speaking, and said that they must blame their secretary, not me, if I did not rise properly to the occasion. I then looked round and saw a gentleman sitting in front of me with a ruddy, smiling face, and his hands crossed over a portly paunch, who looked as if he might be easily amused, so I

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told stories of the *Olympic* to him, and the next thing I noticed was the chairman putting his piece of paper in front of me! I had to hurry then, and concluded my remarks by telling him that owing to the chairman's action I had not had an opportunity to enlarge on "the blood thicker than water business" with which I had expected to have to fill up the time, but that the doings of the men who had volunteered from Toronto and other parts of Canada at the front showed that they were better posted in that subject than I was. I then sat down in rather a bewildered frame of mind amidst tumultuous applause, and before I had recovered from my astonishment the chairman rushed me off to tell a birthday story to his boys, who were assembled in readiness. It was the Anniversary Day of the opening of the college.

After that the Mayor and Mr. Thorley took me for a drive in a car to show me the sights of the beautiful city of Toronto, and we had, at least I had, a most enjoyable time, and many people turned up at the station to see me off to New York that evening.

When my leave was up and time arrived for my return to England there was a strike on amongst the stevedores at New York, so that no ships were sailing from that port, and I returned by the *Megantic* via Montreal. Montreal was gaily decorated with flags in honour of the visit of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales when the *Megantic* passengers from New York arrived there early one morning. An amusing story regarding the Prince was told to me by our manager there that had happened at a ball held on the previous night. He told me there were two ladies of the same name present at the ball, one very important and one very pretty. H.R.H. had been detailed to dance with the former, but through some mistake, presumably, he was found with the pretty one, and on this being pointed out to him, he remarked that he was quite satisfied with things as they were.

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His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, of Belgian fame, was a fellow passenger with me in the *Megantic*, and I am afraid his kindness was imposed on by people on board who wished to pay their respects to him. His secretary took me to see him one day in his state-room. I found him busily engaged in writing. He very kindly put his papers on one side to talk to me, and to my surprise he seemed to know all about the *Olympic* and appeared interested in her career. I thought from this that the bedroom steward who was in attendance on him, who had previously sailed with me, had been talking to him about me.

I tried to get him to talk about the tragedy of Belgium in the early days of the war, but as he seemed disinclined to discuss that subject I did not press my inquiries. Later on in the voyage he gave me a signed photograph of himself as a "cordial souvenir," which has an honoured place in my gallery of distinguished people who have similarly honoured me.

I was appointed one of the Royal Naval Reserve Aides-de-Camp to His Majesty the King on July 16, 1919, and during my term as such had the honour of being in attendance on His Majesty at two of the investitures that were held at Buckingham Palace. He very graciously spoke to me about my ship, and said he was always very pleased to have his sailors round him.

On my arrival home from my holiday I was appointed to assist our Marine Superintendents in a more or less advisory capacity. This I took to be a kindly act on the part of our managers to provide an excuse to keep me on full pay, as I had very little to do till I rejoined the *Olympic* at Belfast at the end of May, 1920.

We sailed from there for Southampton early in June, with a number of distinguished guests on board. Among them was the late Viscount Pirrie, who was with us in a dual capacity, as a director of the White Star Line and

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chairman of Harland & Wolff's. As usual, he was accompanied by Lady Pirrie and her sister, Miss Carlisle. They were the only ladies amongst the guests, and took the greatest interest in everything that went on during the trip. Lady Pirrie made a very charming speech in proposing Mr. Sanderson's health, which was received with vociferous applause, and later, with the ship's Surgeon, Dr. Beaumont, for a dancing partner, opened the new ballroom which had been added to the luxuries of the *Olympic*.

Our chairman, in his speech of welcome to the guests, referred to the ship as "our one ewe lamb," meaning, of course, the last of our big ships that was left after the war. When Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson replied, he took exception to this, saying that he thought "ram" would be a more appropriate name for her, and referred to the sinking of the submarine in confirmation of his view.

Amongst my most pleasant memories are the occasions on which Lord and Lady Pirrie have crossed the Atlantic under my care. The last time was in the *Olympic* when they made their trip to Mexico on which Lord Inverforth accompanied them. He did not go in the wilds as they did, as he was still connected with our Government, and the Mexican Government was not recognized by us.

They all sat at my table, and changed places at it as their fancy pleased them, and perhaps I may be permitted to tell the following story to illustrate the great care Lady Pirrie always took of his Lordship's health, and how he was guided by her wishes.

One night at dinner, Lord Inverforth, who was seated on my right, took some peas that were being handed round, when Lord Pirrie from the bottom of the table said, "I will have some of those, Steward." Lady Pirrie, who was on my left, interrupted her conversation to look at him, and said, "No." "Just a spoonful, my dear,

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they won't hurt me," he said. "No," reiterated her Ladyship, and went on talking to me.

He took them, but I noticed they were still on his plate when it was removed.

The late Viscount was a tireless worker, as everybody knows, and seemed to be very proud of this trait in his character, as the following story will illustrate.

After the trial trip of the *Laurentic* we returned to Belfast one evening, and next day about noon I called at Harland & Wolff's to find out if there was anything they wanted me for before I returned to Liverpool. This was during the period that Lord Pirrie was attached to the Viceregal Court at Dublin as Comptroller of the Household.

As I entered the building I met him going along the corridor towards the luncheon-room. He took me by the arm and said, "Come on in to lunch; Carlisle and I are going to have it early as I have to catch the 1.30 train to Dublin to attend to my duties as chief steward at the Castle."

During lunch I noticed that Mr. Carlisle, the managing director of Harland & Wolff's, did not seem to be quite up to his usual mark, so I asked him if he did not feel well. "There's nothing the matter with him," said Lord Pirrie, "he has had a morning with me, that is all. Even your Mr. Ismay can't keep up with me. He went to bed tired out at eleven o'clock on the night of the trial trip, while I stayed up till half-past two." I heard afterwards that the reason he had stayed up so late was that he was telling stories in the Chief Engineer's room to the Board of Trade surveyors who were on board, and incidentally he had kept them from their well-earned rest too.

It was with genuine sorrow that we heard of the death of Viscount Pirrie on our homeward voyage in June, 1924, in the *Majestic*. We all felt that we had lost a good

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friend in him, and our hearts were full of sympathy for Lady Pirrie in her great sorrow.

Lord Inverforth, who had gone out to New York with us to meet him on his arrival there from South America, sent me a wireless message to tell me the sad news, and asked me in it to break it as gently as I could to Sir Joseph White Todd, one of Lord Pirrie's most intimate friends, who was returning to England with me.

Sir Joseph and I had been talking about Lord Pirrie at lunch only a few hours before the message arrived, and he had said that he did not think Lord Pirrie was looking at all well when he had left him in South America. Owing to that, my melancholy task was rendered somewhat easier than it might otherwise have been.

Lord Inverforth seemed not a little proud of the fact that he was the only "character" who was treated tenderly by the "Gentleman with the Duster" who wrote "The Mirrors of Downing Street," which had been published a short time previous to our sailing. The copy I have of it was given to me by him as a souvenir of the trip.

CHAPTER XVI

THE *OLYMPIC* AGAIN

I DO not remember ever having seen more smiling faces amongst the ship's company on a sailing day, on any ship, than there were on the *Olympic* when we sailed from Southampton in June, 1920, on her first trip after she had been reconditioned and converted to an oil-burner. We were all glad to get to sea again in a civilized ship. The camouflage was gone, she was "spick and span" like a new ship, and our passengers had happy faces, as if they, too, were glad to see her in commission again.

I was far from sorry to get to work once more, if being responsible for the smooth running of a ship where everybody from the heads of departments down to the humblest bell-boy on board are at the top of their class and keen on giving of their best, can truthfully be called work.

Everything went well with the new oil fuel installation right from the start. The revolutions hardly varied a decimal point throughout the voyage, which was a great improvement on coal-burning.

From the passengers' point of view the ship was perfect, particularly as there were no clinkers from her funnels falling about, and very often into their eyes, when we had a fair wind. This also pleased the ship's Surgeon, as he was not called on at all hours of the day to remove clinkers from people's eyes.

Somehow I don't think the travelling public would have taken kindly to the use of oil fuel in passenger steamers had it not been for the war. Prior to it they had the idea firmly embedded in their minds that oil was of a very

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dangerous nature and would easily take fire, whereas the contrary is the truth. If anyone tried to set fire to it in the tanks, even with a lighted torch, he would find it impossible. The temperature must be increased and the oil vaporized before it will ignite. The use of oil fuel in passenger steamers must therefore be put down to the credit of the war.

Amongst our passengers on our return trip were Mr. and Mrs. James Speyer, of New York, and one day, when our Victualling Supervisor, Mr. John Bartholomew, was present, they were discussing with other friends the after effects of the war. Mrs. Speyer said that the Germans would haggle, and haggle, and haggle till they had got the reparations payment down to the last possible penny, and then would pay it immediately.

I do not know that she had any inside information on the subject, but she has proved right so far as the haggling part of her statement is concerned, and time will prove whether she was right as to the paying part.

Passengers make strange requests at times, though in most cases I suppose they think there is nothing out of the way in asking them. On one trip, when a friend of mine from Washington D.C. was crossing with his very beautiful wife—an English girl, by the way—we had some fun at my table which illustrates my meaning.

My friends were seated one on either side of me, and next to him was a lady who was apparently intimately acquainted with all the millionairesses we had on board, as at each meal she would have something to say about one or other of them. Two other ladies completed the party at my table.

One day during lunch she said one of her friends had requested her to ask me if I would go close to the ss. *New York*, outward bound from Cherbourg, and lower a boat to transfer her daughter from that ship to the *Olympic*. She had had no time to stop her from sailing by cable

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before we sailed from New York. "How many millions did you say your friend had?" I asked. "Twenty," I think it was she answered, or it may have been forty, as all her friends were very rich. I then said, "Just ask her how many of them it is worth to have her daughter transferred. It is a business proposition, and if she names a big enough figure I will send a wireless message to our managers, and they will, no doubt, consider it." I heard nothing more about that beyond that she considered "it would be a kindly action on my part to oblige her friend, as it wouldn't take long to do it."

Another day she told us that one of her friends was going to spend twenty thousand dollars in fitting out a "beauty parlour" in New York, which she was to conduct. We all gave her advice and suggestions as to the best way to run it, and I heard more on that trip about the artifices of women's make-up and the agonies they go through to beautify themselves than I had ever believed possible.

My friend's wife was unanimously selected to be the example of what the treatment could effect, and was to be provided with a comfortable seat in the window in full view of the passers-by. In her case, of course, no artifices were necessary to enhance her charm and beauty, so we were not taking any chances as to how the treatment might turn out.

My contribution to the discussion that went on was to tell them the story of a Russian princess who once crossed with me from New York. At least she said she was a princess when she sent to ask me to see her. She told me that she would remain in her room and not come down to any meals, as she had had all the outer skin removed from her face and shoulders so that she would be more beautiful when the new skin grew again. "Just like a baby's my complexion will be," she said. I asked if such drastic operations were to be carried on at the "parlour,"

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and suggested that if they were some more pleasing-looking people than those who had performed on the princess should be employed. They had brought her down to the ship and were partaking of champagne in her room when I got there, and a tougher-looking lot of men than they were I never wish to see again. Charlatanism was written all over them, and they seemed to be glad that the princess was leaving the shores of America, no doubt in case they would be "run in" for malpractice. From the behaviour and appearance of them I wouldn't have trusted anyone of them to shave a poodle if it belonged to me, let alone to monkey with my face.

In September, 1921, Chief Deskaheh of the Six Nations returned to New York with me after his visit to England to beg for the protection of His Majesty the King against the desire of the Canadian Government to force them to become citizens of Canada. He claimed that his people were allies of Great Britain, and had been given possession of the lands they now occupy in perpetuity by treaty with the British Government in 1746, I think it was.

He was so impressed with the size and speed of the *Olympic* that he wrote me a letter asking me to allow him to bestow on me, as representing the ship, the highest honour it was in his power to give, namely, to make me an honorary member of the Tribes of the Six Nations.

I felt a little diffident at first about accepting the honour, as I had always understood that it had only previously been bestowed on members of our Royal Family, Governors-General of Canada, and other such high dignitaries, when they visited the Indian Reservations in person.

However, after further consideration, and some pressure from the leading members of my ship's company, I accepted, and the ceremony took place in my room one morning at eleven o'clock.

Chief Deskaheh came up garbed in his full dress costume as an Indian chief, and accompanied by his legal

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adviser. I and my supporters, Dr. Beaumont and Mr. Lancaster, put on our ceremonial uniform in honour of the occasion.

The Chief was most dignified, and after addressing me in English and naming me "Tah-ny-a-dies"—"The man who crosses the Great Waters," he argued that the Cayuga Tribe was the most suitable one for a sailor to become a member of, as their emblem was a turtle.

He then said that it was usual on such occasions for the members of the Six Nations present to sing of the deeds of their new member, which he proceeded to do in his own language, after swaying his body about for a minute or so to get the rhythm. Then he presented the Pipe of Peace to me, and we shook hands and the ceremony was over.

I had a most interesting conversation with him afterwards, when he showed me a copy of the treaty made between the Indians and the British Government during the war between France and England for the possession of Canada. He seemed concerned, too, that many of the younger members of the Six Nations were abandoning their country to take up work in Canada, and from that I judged that time would accomplish without force what the Canadian Government wants. He was disappointed, too, that he had not been able to plead his cause in person to the King, who was in Scotland during his visit, and had only been able to state his case to the Secretary for the Colonies.

Some time later, previous to Lord Robert Cecil's visit to the United States to lecture on the League of Nations, Chief Deskaheh wrote to tell me that he expected to come to Europe again in the near future to lay his case before the League of Nations, and hoped that he would be able to travel with me once more. He also enclosed in his letter a copy of the statement he had drawn up to place before that body.

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Lord Robert Cecil sat next to me when he was going out to New York, so I took advantage of the opportunity to mention the matter to him, and gave him the statement to read. He appeared to be sympathetic, but gave me the impression that he did not think it was a case in which the League of Nations could interfere.

An illustration of how facts get distorted. A short time ago, early in 1924, my friend Captain McKinstry was staying at an hotel in Bath with his sister. One evening when they were in the lounge of the hotel after dinner he overheard a clergyman, who had evidently lately been a passenger on the *Majestic*, holding forth more or less truthfully on the merits and wonders of the ship. After he had finished talking about the ship he spoke about "the virtues" of her commander, and wound up his discourse by saying, "the strangest thing about him is that he is a full-blooded Indian." This was too much for McKinstry, so he spoke to the reverend gentleman, and told him that he was mistaken as I was a "pal" of his and no more a full-blooded Indian than was the Prince of Wales or Mr. Lloyd George, who had lately received the same honour that I had.

We had become used to the peaceful routine of the *Olympic*, and the war had faded into the background of our thoughts when the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Lee of Fareham, with his staff of distinguished Naval officers, sailed with us in the *Olympic* to take part in the Naval Disarmament Conference held at Washington in November, 1921.

Their first question, "Where are my men going to exercise?" brought the war vividly back to our minds, as it was quite in the style to which we had become accustomed during war-time. The men in question were a party of Marines who, we presumed, were to act as messengers at Washington.

Our reply was that decks were provided for all classes

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of passengers, and whichever class they were travelling in the deck for that particular class would be the appropriate place for them to exercise.

Later we found the Marines were doing "sentry go" on the First Lord's suite of rooms, so after consideration we waived the enforcement of the regulations which forbid the different classes of passengers to intermingle while en route to the United States. We thought, in view of the importance of their visit, that the Health Officer would not hold the ship up on this account when we reported the matter to him on our arrival at Quarantine; an assumption, I am glad to remember, that proved to be correct, as had it turned out otherwise, our other passengers would have had just cause for complaint.

We were further reminded of the war when one of the officers on Lord Lee's Staff asked to be shown the way to the kitchen, as he had some papers to destroy. This was in accordance, of course, with Naval Regulations which require that confidential papers must be destroyed by fire by a commissioned officer, of I forget what rank—the officer commanding the ship, I think. To us it hardly seemed necessary to go to such extremes on a passenger liner, and when our other passengers got wind of it, as somehow they did, this, together with the sentries on the First Lord's suite, caused them to give vent to their astonishment, not to call it amusement, that such precautions should be considered necessary by people who were part of a Mission going out to consider plans to establish peace in a distracted and over-taxed world.

Many times we were asked, "Who does he think is going to hurt him?" to which question we could, of course, give no adequate reply.

On another voyage the war was brought back to our recollections in a more amusing way.

The American Ambassador, Mr. John W. Davis, was going out to New York with us, and an escort of de-

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stroyers was sent about half-way across the Channel as a compliment to him.

When we were approaching the American coast I received a wireless message from a U.S. destroyer asking me for my position, course and speed, and at what time we expected to pass Nantucket Light-vessel. I naturally concluded that she had been sent out to escort the returning Ambassador. As soon as we sighted the destroyer I sent down word to Mr. Davis to acquaint him with the fact.

It was a lovely evening when the destroyer took up station close to us, and accommodated his speed to ours, as was done in war-time. Very soon after this we received a visual message from the Captain asking if a certain lady was on deck, and after finding out, I replied that she was, and from the interchange of messages between them I judged that his business was of a private nature and not to escort the Ambassador into New York.

While this was going on I heard that Mr. Davis and Senator Edge, who was also a passenger with us, were engaged in friendly banter as to which of them the United States Government wished to honour, both of them disclaiming it.

The real reason for the destroyer's presence soon passed round the ship, and some friends of the lady brought up a message from her to the bridge with a request that we would transmit it to the Captain of the destroyer. It was of such loving nature that I felt sure she only meant it to reach the ear of the officer concerned, and had not realized that most of his ship's company would be able to take it in. Thinking of the officer's feelings—sailors being proverbially bashful—I took the liberty of modifying it somewhat before sending it, and informed the bearer to that effect.

Later I received a signal from him asking at what time we expected to anchor at the Quarantine Station, and

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saying that he would come on board. I gave the time, but told him he could not come on board till after the ship had been passed.

We anchored at about midnight, and he anchored as close to us as was possible, and next morning bright and early both he and the lady were on the *qui vive* to meet each other.

He couldn't wait for pratique to be granted but followed the Health Officer on board, only to be stopped at the gangway and soundly rated for so doing by that official, who also told him he would report the matter to the Naval authorities at Washington.

In the meantime the lady had heard that he was on board, and in her anxiety to get to him quickly, took a flying leap into his arms from about half-way down the last flight of stairs, much to the amusement of everybody who was in the vicinity. Let us hope that the ecstatic moment that they then enjoyed compensated them for their long wait and him for the wiggling he had received from the Health Officer.

After the ship had been granted pratique the newspaper men flocked on board all agog to get details of the romance. The lady by this time must have cooled down somewhat, as one of the reporters told me afterwards that she had implored them not to refer to the incident in the Press, even going so far as to deny her engagement to the officer who had so gallantly risked so much to be with her at the first possible moment. It was, however, too good "a story" for them to miss. The following morning's papers devoted columns to it.

Surely a unique affair in the annals of any Naval service! But it transpired later that he was not quite using a Government vessel for his own private purpose. He was acting under orders to take his destroyer for a twenty-four-hour cruise to train his new crew in their duties. That the date of the cruise synchronized with the

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arrival of his lady-love was just a piece of good luck for him.

Major George Haven Putnam, a veteran of the American Civil War, and one of the leading spirits of the English-Speaking Union in the United States, was always a very welcome passenger with us in the *Olympic*, and is still in the *Majestic*, where he lately celebrated his eightieth birthday. Each time that he is on board he arranges a meeting to further the aims of the English-Speaking Union amongst the passengers, and is most enthusiastic in arranging for speakers at his meetings and in enrolling converts.

When Admiral Sims was recalled from his holidays in Europe by the Secretary for the Navy to be "disciplined" by him for making a speech in London, in which he was considered to have expressed too friendly feelings towards the British Nation, he returned in the *Olympic*, and I had the great pleasure of having him and Mrs. Sims seated by me in the dining-saloon. I do not recall that the distinguished Admiral was unduly perturbed by the thought of what would happen to him on his arrival at Washington, but I do remember him chuckling over the fact that, having recalled him from his leave of absence, the Navy Department would naturally have to pay for his passage back.

"The Major," as Major Haven Putnam is always affectionately called on the ship, was a fellow passenger with the Admiral, and, as usual, was busily engaged in forwarding the interests of the English-Speaking Union.

One day, during lunch, he came over to my table—from time immemorial he has always sat with Mr. Lancaster, the Purser, and that arrangement was never disturbed—and said, "Admiral, I am having a meeting this afternoon and would very much like to have you speak at it." Admiral Sims laughed and replied, "Well, Major, I think I had better get out of one scrape before I get

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into another," and the Major accepted that as a valid excuse, and did not push his request.

Another prominent New York family who constantly crossed in our ships and of whom I have pleasant recollections is that of the late Mr. E. H. Van Ingen. He also celebrated his eightieth birthday while crossing with me in the *Olympic*, and danced a jig in honour of it. That particular voyage was fated to be his last, as he was stricken with illness and died a short time later, though no one who saw him when he landed at New York, looking hale and hearty, would have thought it possible that we should soon lose our friend. He was familiarly known as "Commodore of the Atlantic," on account of the many crossings he had made, and now his son, Mr. McLane Van Ingen, and his son are keeping up the tradition of being faithful to the White Star Line ships by making two round voyages a year in one or other of them.

His kindly thought in sending over large gifts of clothing, dressings for the wounded, and food-stuffs to the hospitals in England from the beginning to the end of the war was well known to us who carried them over, but I doubt very much whether anyone else excepting those who were immediately concerned ever heard of his generosity.

His constant friend and companion on his voyages, extending over the long period of forty-six years, was Mr. W. P. Willis, who was also his rival in business. He continues to cross the Atlantic though over eighty-one years of age, his son accompanying him on his business tours.

The gentleman in Mr. Van Ingen's office who always saw to his passage being engaged told me that he also was a rival of Mr. Morgan's for the best rooms in the *Britannic* and *Germanic* in the old days when their dates of sailing clashed, and that on one occasion he missed getting the particular room that Mr. Van Ingen wished

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for. Mr. Van Ingen, so I have been told, was an autocrat of the old school in his office, always wore a top hat to his business, and was impatient of mistakes, so to avoid the possibility of such a thing occurring again the rooms on the sailings of the *Britannic* and *Germanic* that were nearest to April 20 and October 20 were engaged for him for ten years in advance. We never saw that side of him at sea. He was always most genial and pleasant—they were holiday days, no doubt, with him, and he enjoyed them to the full.

There are very few of the veteran travellers now crossing the Atlantic that I remember in my young days. Others are coming on, though, and are already beginning to refer with pride to the number of crossings they have made. Mr. J. E. Hargreaves, Deputy Lieutenant of the County of Westmorland for some years, is probably the oldest of them all, and he, when I saw him in our New York office in May, 1924, talked of that being his last trip. But I didn't believe him. He very seldom honours us with his presence in our Southampton ships, as he prefers the slower ships sailing from Liverpool. They are not usually so full of passengers. My earliest recollection of him goes back to 1891, when I was Fourth Officer of the *Teutonic*, and he used to come into our mess-room to mix Russian salads for us and sometimes stayed to help eat them.

I first met Sir Thomas Lipton during the South African War days, when one of his yachts was being tuned up in Southampton Water ready to cross the Atlantic to race for the America Cup, which everybody will remember she did not bring back. Later, when I was in command of the *Arabic* and he was having another try to "lift the Cup" with his *Shamrock III*, he invited my friend Captain McKinstry and myself to spend a night on board his steam yacht *Erin*, which was anchored inside of Sandy Hook, and to sail in *Shamrock III* in one

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of her trial races against *Shamrock I* next day. We both accepted his invitation, and on the appointed day took the Sandy Hook boat with pleasurable anticipation.

The steam pinnacle from the *Erin* met us at the landing-pier and took us off to the yacht, where we were met by Sir Thomas, and spent a most enjoyable evening with him and his other guests. The entertainment after dinner consisted in his secretary reading a number of letters from ladies to Sir Thomas offering to be his mascot during the races, or sending him such things as rabbits' feet to bring him good luck. They were very amusing, and I am not quite sure that some of them did not contain offers of marriage, so as to ensure that the good luck they wished for him would continue even after the races were over.

We were not privileged to know the names of his correspondents, however, as his discreet secretary substituted the names of the cities whence the letters came for the signatures that they bore.

McKinstry and I were on deck bright and early next morning, and to our great satisfaction found a fresh breeze blowing and a bright sun shining.

Later on, Sir Thomas came on deck, and we thought he was not quite in his usual cheery spirits, and wondered what the trouble was, till he said: "I am sorry you can't go in *Shamrock III*, as Fyffe objects, but you can go in No. 1 if you would like to." He then explained that Mr. Fyffe, the designer and builder of the yacht, was more or less nervous as to what might happen during the trials, as she was not properly tuned up for racing—blocks might fall or something might carry away and injure us, and he would not like such things to happen to strangers.

In the circumstances we disclaimed any wish to go, and said that there was really too much wind for steam-boat sailors, such as we were, to go on either yacht, and

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that we would much rather stay on the *Erin*, where the lunch was, if he did not mind.

He then very kindly called a boat alongside and we all went to have a look over *Shamrock III* and the house-boat he had engaged for the accommodation of the crews of both yachts, and McKinsty and I privately came to the conclusion that trying to "lift the Cup" must be a very expensive business.

I afterwards had the pleasure of being a guest on the *Erin* during one of the real races, but as it turned out to be a "drifting match," neither of the contestants finishing the course within the specified time, there was not very much excitement in watching it. That was the year when they went out five days in succession and never succeeded in completing a race.

The last time I had the pleasure of meeting Sir Thomas was one morning at New York when he came down to the *Olympic* to see Lord Dewar and another friend off after another try to "lift the Cup" in 1920. I was going down the main companionway when I met him and his friends coming up. He took me by the arm and led me on to the boat-deck, saying that he wanted to speak to me.

He was instantly surrounded by a number of "movie" camera men and many pictures were taken. He acted, as to the manner born, and the thought flashed through my mind that, if the worst came to the worst, and the Labour Party succeeded in passing the Capital Levy that is so much talked about, and were to confiscate all his wealth, he would still have a means of livelihood left.

Good luck to him in his next attempt to "lift the Cup."

Another captain of industry to whom I should like to refer is Mr. H. Gordon Selfridge. I first met him during the war, or just after it, when I was travelling from London to Liverpool on my way home from Southampton after one of my voyages. He was seated opposite to me in the

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dining-car, and asked me if I knew whether there were many people on the train for "the boat." It must have been after the war, as I remember he had no reason that I knew of to take me for a sailor, as I was in civilian attire. I told him that I thought the train connected with the Belfast steamer, but I could not say whether many people were going to cross.

He then said: "My name is Selfridge, and I mean the *Berengaria*; she is sailing from the Gladstone Dock at one o'clock in the morning." "Not *the* Selfridge?" I queried, and when he acknowledged that he was, we had a long talk, as, of course, I had often heard of him, and had had his late wife as a passenger with me several times, and when she crossed she gave me the pleasure of her company at table.

He has crossed with me two or three times since then, the last time being in the *Majestic*. He is a very cheery companion at table, and never seems to miss an opportunity of doing a kindness to anybody. For instance, my Second Officer told me one morning that his son was about to leave school, and asked me if I thought Mr. Selfridge would object to giving him a little advice as to what to do with him. I was confident that he would not, so mentioned the matter to him at the breakfast-table, when he replied: "Certainly, tell him to come to see me in my state-room when he comes off watch." He went, with the result that his boy is now under Mr. Selfridge's wing and is, I hear, doing very well.

I wish I could relate the particulars of the interview my Second Officer, his wife and son, had with him when they kept the appointment he made for them at his office in London, but perhaps I had better not. It must have been very amusing to Mr. Selfridge if it was anything like the officer's description of it when he returned to the ship. "He laughed till he nearly fell out of his chair," was one of the remarks he made. I dare say Mr. Selfridge re-

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members it, and perhaps has added the account of the interview to his fund of good stories.

On our arrival at Southampton on January 7, 1922, I left the *Olympic*, having been appointed to command the *Majestic*, which was being completed at Hamburg. In the meantime I was given what our managers were good enough to call "well-earned leave of absence."

My successor in command of the *Olympic*, Captain A. E. Hambelton, had accompanied me on my last voyage in her to "pick up the ropes" regarding her, and was teasingly referred to as my pupil. He was noted throughout the company for generally having foggy weather when making Nantucket Light-vessel, and he himself said that he had only seen it twice in a number of years, but as he was also affectionately known as the biggest liar crossing the Atlantic when recounting some of his experiences, I did not quite credit his statement.

When we were approaching Nantucket in fine, clear weather at about 2 A.M., I sent an officer down to his stateroom, where he was peacefully asleep, to invite him to come on the bridge to have a look at it so that he could recognize it again should he ever be fortunate enough to see it. He just turned over in his warm bed, and replied that he would take my word that it had not altered in character since he saw it last, and then went to sleep again.

I severed my connexion with the *Olympic* with a good deal of reluctance, in spite of the fact that my next command was to be "the largest ship in the world." I had spent a very happy period of over six years in command of her, but I got consolation from the thought that a good proportion of the ship's company who had served so loyally under me in that ship would rejoin me when I took command of the new one.

The *Majestic* still remains "the largest ship in the world," in spite of the fact that the tonnage of the *Levia-*

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than was increased from something less than hers to about three thousand tons more, while she was being reconditioned as a passenger steamer, without either her length, breadth or depth being increased in the slightest degree. She has the honour, however, of paying the highest dock dues in consequence, a fact which is very pleasing to the harbour authorities at the various ports at which she calls.

CHAPTER XVII

TAKING OVER THE *BISMARCK*

AT the end of June, 1921, I retired from the Royal Naval Reserve and was granted the retired rank of Commodore 2nd Class, which I very much appreciated.

Of all the distinctions and honours that I have had bestowed on me during my life at sea, the one that has given me the greatest pleasure was when the directors and managers of the company that I have served for so many years revived the position of "Commodore of the White Star Line Fleet" in my favour when I left the *Olympic*, and told me that I was to fly "the flag," my flag, I might say, on the *Majestic* when she was commissioned. The rank had been in vogue in the earlier days of the Line, but had been abolished some years before I joined the company's service in 1889, for the reason, so the story went—with what foundation I cannot say—that the then holder of it considered that it entitled him not only to run his ship in the way that suited him, but also to tell the directors and managers how they ought to conduct their business. In other words, suffered from "swelled head."

For this reason I felt that it was only after much consideration they had decided to revive it, and therefore they must have thought that the service I had been able to render the company required special consideration, which, of course, was very flattering to me, and showed that they did not think I would be likely to offend in the way my predecessor had.

I prized the honour for another reason, and that was that my eldest brother retired from the sea after having

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held the same rank in the service of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company for some years previous to his retirement.

It was with very mixed feelings that I received orders from our managers towards the end of March, 1922, to go to Hamburg to take command of the *Majestic* when she would be handed over to us after the completion of her trials, as I fully expected it would prove to be a very unpleasant experience; however, "orders were orders," and I had to go and make the best of it.

On my arrival there I heard that Messrs. Blohm & Voss, her builders, had not at first shown a particularly friendly attitude towards our people, who had been there for some months learning all about the ship and engines. Had it not been that Mr. Harland, of the firm of Harland & Wolff, who was looking after our interests there, was a man of an exceptionally tactful nature, and Mr. Wolff, who was to take up the position of Chief Engineer, a man whom nothing could put out and who could get on with anybody, I felt that things would have been much more difficult than they turned out to be.

There must be some freemasonry amongst engineers of all nationalities that causes them, when they are putting their beloved engines together, to forget any animosities they may have against each other. I found that everybody, British and Germans, were working together in the most amiable way. I also found that the deck officers had established more or less friendly relations with those with whom they came in contact in their work.

When they first arrived at Hamburg they had been told that all the foremen and leading hands in connexion with the shipbuilding yard had been warned not to be too friendly with them or to show eagerness to impart information. With this idea in view rumours were circulated amongst the men that the ship was not being handed over as part of the reparations that Germany had

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to pay, but that having built "the finest ship in the world" they had had to sell her as the Germans were too poor to run her themselves. Another story that was in circulation during our stay in Hamburg was that had there been any intention on the part of the Allies to hand the *Bismarck* over to the French instead of to the British, the Germans would have taken good care that she never left the Elbe. These precautions no doubt had something to do with her eventually getting to sea without any attempt being made to prevent her.

The *Bismarck*, as she was then called, was originally intended to use coal as fuel, but our directors decided to have her converted to use oil fuel before she left Hamburg. They also decided to have bilge keels fitted to lessen her rolling when in a seaway, and to have many other alterations made to bring her up to our standard.

She had been launched prior to the outbreak of war, and work was continued on her till such time as the Germans became doubtful as to the outcome of it. Then all work on her was stopped and, later, all her brass fittings and copper piping were removed for the purpose of making munitions. I have heard it stated, on very good authority, too, that the reason they had continued work on her during the earlier stages of the war was so that she would be ready at the end of it to take the Kaiser and the Crown Prince on a triumphal tour round the world, and that the large suites of rooms on either side of C Deck were fitted specially for their accommodation. When we joined the ship they were named "The Kaiser Suite" and "The Crown Prince Suite" respectively.

The date the *Bismarck* was to leave Hamburg was fixed, and we were told that we were to be the guests of the German Government until her trials were completed. We were guests no doubt, but it did not appear to us that our hosts had made very strenuous efforts to shine as such. When we arrived on board with our baggage,

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we found that the rooms we were to occupy on F Deck were not ready for us. Mine was full of spare wash-basins, and there was not even a bed in it. It was the same with everyone else's, with the exception of the rooms allotted to Mr. Cauty, our manager, Mr. Wilding, of Harland & Wolff's, and Mr. Harland.

On the other hand, the accommodation that had been reserved for the German guests and officials on B and C Decks was all in apple-pie order, and each room had a neat card over the door with the name of the individual who was to occupy it printed on it.

However, our Chief Steward, Mr. Jennings, was a man of resource, and with the aid of the three or four stewards he had under him soon made us as comfortable as was possible in the circumstances.

Captain Ruser, to whom I have referred previously, had been appointed to take charge of the *Bismarck* during her trials. I met him several times before "the day" came, and had found him apparently just as cheery as ever, though owing to force of circumstances he had had to give up his activities at sea and had become a partner in a firm of wine merchants. He told me he was doing very well at it, and, at any rate, he looked prosperous. He asked me if I thought our manager would have any objection to his taking a friend with him for the trials. I told him that Mr. Cauty had nothing to do with it as he was a guest like the rest of us, and advised him to ask permission from Messrs. Blohm & Voss.

Whether he acted on my advice or not I cannot say, but when the ship returned to the anchorage off Cuxhaven after her trials he had a row with Major Blohm and his services were dispensed with. Later I met him and his wife on shore at the hotel, so presumed that he had had her with him as his friend and had been bowled out by the "fire-eating" Major.

When the ship left Hamburg on the afternoon of

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March 28, 1922, her German name was painted on either bow, and "Bismarck, Hamburg," across her stern; not a flag of any description was flying, and her funnels were painted with the Hamburg-American colours.

As she commenced to move away from the fitting-out berth the workmen from all over the yard came running towards her to watch her go, but not a sound came from any of them, neither was there any from the thousands of people who lined the banks of the river as we passed slowly down. A German artist who was on board referred to Hamburg as "The City of Silence," and pointing to the banks of the river, said: "There are tens of thousands of her weeping citizens who are sorrowfully watching her pass."

Several launches filled with young men singing were dodging under her stern, and some curious person amongst us asked the artist why they were doing it, and he replied: "They are singing a lament."

The ship stuck in the mud for a while after leaving the wharf, which seemed to add impressiveness, or solemnity, to the occasion, and when at the very top of the tide she was freed and turned down the river, with two powerful Belgian tugs fast to her to assist her round the bends, it seemed the irony of fate that the once-powerful German nation should need the assistance of "Little Belgium" to get their largest ship to sea, only to be handed over to the nation that had first responded to Belgium's call for assistance when she was invaded.

Our feelings were somewhat mixed, but that did not prevent us from taking an intelligent interest in the manœuvring of the ship. We could not help wondering, though, as to what thoughts were passing through the minds of those who had the responsibility of getting her safely to sea and of those who were watching her vanish into the distance. I have heard some of our Naval officers, who have crossed with me since, say that they

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never thought that the *Majestic* would reach England. They fully expected she would meet the same fate as the German Fleet.

In due course she got safely down the river and anchored for the night off Cuxhaven, and next day, bright and early, they got her under way again for her steaming trials.

All sorts of rumours had been flying about for days previously as to the length of time her trials would take; some said forty-eight hours, while others thought twenty-four would be sufficient. It finally transpired, however, that all the German Government required from her builders was that they should produce 66,000 horse-power on the engines, and that did not take long to develop. She simply steamed for three hours out into the North Sea, and then returned to the same anchorage she had left.

On the way back we asked for a few experiments to be carried out to test her turning and stopping qualities. Our request was very readily acquiesced in, and I must say that she exceeded our expectations in every way she was tried, and, for her size, proved herself to be a very handy ship.

After she had anchored again, a meeting was held, at which I was not present, but I heard afterwards, that though the trials of the engines had proved satisfactory, exception had been taken by the British representatives to the unfinished state of her passenger accommodation, and after considerable discussion had taken place, it had been decided to give the builders another week to complete it before she was accepted.

We ceased to be guests on our return, but remained on board, a charge being made for our food and accommodation, so perhaps it is permissible for me to say something about the unpalatable food that was provided for us. Raw ham and various kinds of sausage, also raw, formed the staple food for breakfast, and, as most of us could not eat

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it, we had to content ourselves with the badly cooked porridge that preceded it; pork or veal ("fried weal" the man who waited on us used to call the latter, when serving it for lunch or dinner). The beer was very good, however, and that with bread and cheese was all that most of us could tackle. We accepted it as philosophically as was possible, and longed for the time when the ship would be handed over and the cold chamber in which the stores we had had sent over from England for our use could be opened.

One of the largest tables at one end of the dining-saloon was allotted for our use, and when the late-comers for breakfast made their appearance they would be greeted with mild jokes about certain kinds of food to which we knew they were partial being "off." This gave rise to a certain amount of laughter round the table, to which the Germans took exception, thinking, no doubt, that we were making jokes about them, when really we were poking fun at each other to keep our spirits up. They complained to Mr. Cauty about this, and he in his turn gave us a mild lecture on the impropriety of our conduct, and told us they had said they were providing the best food that they could obtain. This was not so, of course, as was proved when Mr. Cauty gave a lunch at the hotel at Cuxhaven to some of the German officials and ourselves, when everything of the best, both to eat and drink, was provided, and speeches were afterwards made. The German Government representative in his speech in reply to Mr. Cauty's was moved to refer to the meal he had just finished as a "Poem in lunches." I don't suppose he had seen such food since the beginning of the war.

A day or two before the ship was ready to leave for Southampton, the officers and men who were to take her across arrived in a specially chartered steamer and anchored in the vicinity of the *Bismarck*, as she was still named, but were not allowed on board her until all the Germans had

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taken their departure. The leave-taking with the latter was really pathetic, and we were all glad to see the last of them troop into a tug on one side of the ship while the steamer with our crew on board was coming alongside the other.

The principal people from Blohm & Voss's yard before they left implored us, with halting voices and tears in their eyes, to do the best we could with the ship for the sake of their reputation as her builders.

After they had left, a gang of men were set to work painting out the name *Bismarck* on the bows and stern and substituting *Majestic* for it, and "Liverpool" for "Hamburg" on the stern, while others were employed painting the funnels in White Star Line colours.

At 8 A.M. next day, on a fine Sunday morning, the British Red Ensign was run up with due ceremony to the flagstaff, my flag as Commodore of the White Star Line Fleet was broken at the mainmast-head, and we sailed for Southampton at nine o'clock. We arrived safely next day, April 10, 1922. Everything went well, and we felt that we had a good ship even if she was "made in Germany."

I may say here that we continued to look for "the nigger in the wood pile" with great care for many a long day after this, with the happy result of not finding it, and our confidence in her has gradually been established in consequence.

After a strenuous month spent at Southampton getting the ship's outfit on board and giving her the finishing touches, during which time she had been formally handed over to our company, we embarked a goodly number of passengers for New York, and sailed on her maiden voyage on May 10, calling at Cherbourg the same afternoon to embark our Continental passengers. Everything went well during the passage out, and on our arrival the newspapers said she had established a new record for a maiden

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trip—with what truth I cannot say, as I have never taken such things into my calculations during the twenty-six years I have been in command of the company's steamers. My aim has always been to get my ship to her destination as quickly as possible, paying due regard to the comfort and safety of the passengers I have had under my care and without putting any undue strain on the ship.

As I have already told, Hamburg was referred to as "The City of Silence" when the *Bismarck* left that port, and New York might equally well have been called "The City of Noise" when the *Majestic* arrived there. In all my experience I have never known such an enthusiastic reception given to any new ship as was given to her on that occasion. Curiosity impelled it, I suppose, owing to the circumstances in which a new German ship had arrived under the British flag and manned by a British crew. The Battery was crowded with people as we passed, mostly German-Americans, so I was afterwards told, and the end of every pier on her way up the river. Tugs and river craft all sounded their whistles, while aeroplanes circled overhead, taking photographs and adding to the din by the whirr of their propellers and the noise from their exhausts.

The interest of the New York people in the ship continued all the time we remained there. Crowds came every day to be shown over her, but at the lunch and dinner that were given during our stay I noticed that the speeches were not quite up to the standard of eloquence of those spoken at Southampton on a similar occasion, possibly due to the difference in the liquid refreshments that were served owing to "Prohibition" being in force in the United States.

CHAPTER XVIII

TRAVELLERS OF TO-DAY

IT seems to me that the war has had the effect of making our leading statesmen travel abroad more than formerly.

Four of our ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer have crossed with me since the close of hostilities, and I must say they all seemed very cheery while on board the ship, though all of them did not succeed in their missions, at any rate, in what I thought their missions were.

The Right Honourable Reginald McKenna, P.C., for instance, did not succeed in persuading the American public, in his address to the American Bankers' Association, which was very favourably commented on in the American Press, that it would be as much or more to their advantage if all the war debts were cancelled than it would be to the advantage of Europe in general, and Great Britain in particular. However, if such was his mission, even if he failed in that, he has the satisfaction of remembering that he extracted a goodly sum from the pockets of his fellow-passengers when he so kindly made the appeal on behalf of the seamen's charities, on both sides of the Atlantic, while returning from New York in the *Majestic*.

The Right Honourable Stanley Baldwin, P.C., went over with me to arrange about the funding of the British debt to America. One night during dinner the lady on my right asked me how much leave I got in the course of the year. I explained to her that we did not get any regular leave in the big ships, as the travelling public insisted on their being kept running all the time, and that

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if it wasn't for the Board of Trade insisting on their being laid up sometimes for the purpose of undergoing survey we would not get any leave at all. Mr. Baldwin pricked up his ears when he heard me mention the Board of Trade, and said: "What is that about the Board of Trade? I was President of it once." After I had repeated the "fairy tale" I had told the lady, he said: "That is the first bit of praise I have ever heard given to the Board of Trade, but I have heard lots of abuse of it," which caused a general laugh round the table.

The Right Honourable Sir Robert Horne, P.C., made two unsuccessful attempts to cross with us to New York—his passage being cancelled at the last moment owing to the exigencies of politics on each occasion. But he finally succeeded in getting there. When I was introduced to him by Mr. Workman, one of our passenger department managers, he jokingly said: "I have got here this time, and I have left the country in Mr. Workman's hands while I am away." Mr. Workman said: "I will look after it for you, and will guarantee it will be in the same place when you return." He did not stay very long, as he returned with us a month or so later.

The Right Honourable David Lloyd George, O.M., returned with me from New York after electrifying his many audiences in Canada and the United States with the charm of his eloquence. If I remember rightly, it was eight speeches that he said he had gone over to deliver, and that he had been let in for eighty-four. He was accompanied by his wife and daughter and two secretaries, and they honoured me by accepting seats at my table.

It looked as if his hosts in New York were fearful lest the right honourable gentleman should be kidnapped, or shot, on his way down to the ship, as his party were driven through the streets in which the traffic had been stopped, preceded by an automobile filled with New York's

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"finest," and flanked on either side by more police on motor-cycles. They boarded the ship, too, by a special gangway from the lower deck of the pier at which we were lying, so that the cars could drive straight to the foot of it without stopping. He was rushed on board, surrounded by police, and even after he had reached the "regal suite," which had been allotted to him by the company, police remained on guard till the ship was on the point of sailing. The police also examined every package which had been sent to them as "bon voyage gifts." Presumably they were looking for infernal machines, but I am glad to say they found nothing more deadly than the fruit, flowers, bon-bons, and books such packages usually contain. Mr. Lloyd George smilingly accepted these attentions, but I think he was just as much amused by them as were the people connected with the ship. New York dearly loves to make a fuss over a parting guest.

It was freely stated throughout the ship that Mr. Lloyd George had been heard to say that he had been so much impressed by the prosperity of the United States under Protection that he had made up his mind to advocate it for Great Britain after he arrived home. Whether there was any truth in the statement I cannot say, as I did not hear him say it, but if there were, perhaps the following story will give a clue as to why he altered his mind on the subject.

One day when we were getting near the Channel I went down to the saloon for my lunch, and found that only his party had taken their seats. He was deeply engrossed in reading a wireless message which had been handed to him by one of his secretaries, and I do not think that he noticed me take my seat. He pondered over it for a minute or two, then he handed it back to his secretary.

"That means I am not to say anything," he remarked musingly.

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He then noticed that I was there, and turning towards me said :

"You know, Captain, we politicians very often have to talk a lot and say nothing, while at other times perhaps we don't talk so much but we do say something."

When we arrived at Southampton the tide for docking there did not fit in with the time that had been arranged for his reception and presentation of the freedom of the borough. However, we were on the right side, some three hours too early. He and his party remained on board for lunch, and he had ample time to discuss anything with the distinguished gentlemen who met him on his arrival and who had lunch with him. Sir Alfred Mond was one of them.

At a quarter to three the Mayor of Southampton, accompanied by the rest of the City Fathers, came on board to welcome the right honourable gentleman home, and later a procession was formed to drive him to the Palace Theatre, where he was to receive the freedom of the borough.

As I had been debarred by the company's wise regulations from hearing Mr. Lloyd George speak on board the ship when he kindly made a very successful appeal on behalf of the seamen's charities, I managed, through the kindness of Dame Lloyd George, to secure a seat in one of the carriages to go to the theatre, and, by sticking close to his secretary, a seat in one of the boxes to hear him speak.

He was vociferously acclaimed by the packed audience who were present at the theatre, and made a very eloquent speech, which was broadcast all over the country. But I came away thinking that the occasion had been one of those he had previously told me about, "when politicians have to talk a lot and say nothing." I cannot recall that he said anything about advocating Protection or about any other interesting developments that were likely to

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happen in the near future. Perhaps the occasion was not judged suitable for any such announcement.

An amusing contretemps occurred during the proceedings, which all Southamptonians devoutly hoped had not been broadcast as well as Mr. Lloyd George's speech. After the Mayor's speech in presenting the freedom of the borough, he announced: "We will now sing that well-known Welsh hymn: 'Land of my Fathers.'"

A dead silence followed his announcement, during which the conductor of the orchestra was seen to get up and make frantic signals to the Mayor, who stepped forward and, after some little argument, straightened himself up and said as the orchestra had not got the music of the "Land of my Fathers," "Land of Hope and Glory" would be substituted.

Stowaways are not so numerous now in the Atlantic ships as they used to be formerly. We discover an occasional stranded American on board, who has no money to pay his passage, after getting clear of the Channel. These are made to work, as we know we can do nothing to punish them on our arrival, for by the laws of the United States a man cannot be prosecuted for "stealing a ride," as they call it. It is the steamship company's business to prevent them from doing so, and, of course, their own Immigration authorities cannot prevent them landing in their own country, no matter how poorly off in this world's goods they may be.

The unfortunate Britisher down on his luck, who has not found the United States the El Dorado he expected it to be, and stows away to get back to his own country, is prosecuted on his arrival and usually gets from two weeks to a month in jail.

Stowaways of other nationalities are deported from the United States at the expense of the ship taking them in, and are prosecuted on their arrival in England, where



THE *MAJESTIC* AT NEW YORK



Photo: L.N.A.

SIR BERTRAM HAYES, WITH CAPT. METCALFE, HIS
SUCCESSOR IN COMMAND OF THE *MAJESTIC*

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they are recommended for deportation after their term of imprisonment has expired.

"Stealing a ride" on a railroad in America is no more an indictable offence than on a steamship. Some years ago a man came to see me at New York who had been at school with me in my young days and who was down and out. He had been more or less of a ne'er-do-well in England, and his father had supplied him with funds and sent him to California to establish himself as a fruit-grower. He told me he had spent all the money on his way across the continent, "seeing life" chiefly at Chicago, where he had stayed for some time. He reached Los Angeles with a few dollars in his pocket, and, after loafing in that delightful climate for some time, getting shabbier and shabbier, he decided to beat his way back to New York, where he had a married sister, to see what she would do for him. It took him six weeks to do it, stealing rides on freight trains whenever he could manage it, and when discovered getting kicked off them by the train hands, who were not too particular as to how fast the train was going.

He had many amusing stories of the hoboes—as tramps are called in the United States—of the tricks they showed him as to how to get through life without the aid of money, and to have a good time while doing it. However, that story is his, if he is alive and wishes to write of his experiences, and I simply mention him to show that "stealing a ride" is not an uncommon occurrence on shore as well as at sea.

We do not often find the gentler sex stowing away on board a ship, in fact I have come across only one instance of it during my life at sea. I might call it one and a half times, as on the first occasion the girl concerned gave herself up before we discharged our pilot and was sent back with him.

On the first voyage of the *Majestic*, some little time

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after we had left our pier at New York a child—a precocious child I might call her—was brought up on the bridge, who between her sobs told me she had come on board before we left to see her father, who was one of the stevedores, and had been looking round and didn't know we had left the dock. I believed the young monkey, aged about nine, and tried to comfort her by telling her I would send a message by wireless to her mother to say that she was quite safe, and that the pilot would take her back to her home when he left the ship. He was just as much concerned about her as I was, and had volunteered to look after her. She was given something to eat and was quite happy. On my return to New York I was told that she had reached her home safely and had become quite a heroine amongst her young companions.

Some voyages later, after we had left New York, the Purser came up to my room about nine in the evening and reported that two little girls had been found stowed away. "All right," I said, "bring them along and we will see what they have to say for themselves."

Two tearful little girls made their appearance a few minutes later, and when I looked at them I recognized one of them as the girl we had sent back by the pilot on our first voyage. I listened to their story, which was something similar to the yarn the one had given me before, and then said: "You are the same Katherine who hid yourself on this ship some time ago, and got frightened and gave yourself up. Dry your eyes, and we will decide in a few minutes whether to throw you overboard and let you swim back or to carry you on." She blurted out: "It wasn't me, sir, it was my sister," but there wasn't the slightest doubt she was the same girl.

There was nothing to be done, of course, but to carry them on. I told the Purser to put them in charge of the Matron in the 3rd Class, and to tell her to look after them. I sent a wireless message back to our office acquainting

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them with the facts, and asking them to inform the girls' parents that they were on board.

Their story got spread about the ship, and some kindly passengers provided them with clothing. They soon recovered their equanimity and had a very good time till we got to Southampton, where we handed them over to our office people. They were sent to some Home for Children there, and were shown the sights of Southampton, and returned to New York by our *Homeric*, sailing two or three days later.

Shortly after my message saying that the children were on board reached New York, we were inundated with messages from the newspapers asking about them and their doings. "Are they being made to work? If so, what are they doing?" "How are they being treated?" "Are they being made to scrub the decks?" were some of the queries we received.

My judgment was that the less publicity given to their escapade the better, or we might be inundated with children looking for adventure in the future, so I did not answer any of the messages.

Apparently when the newspaper men found they could not get any information from me they besieged our office at New York, because I finally received a message from our manager asking me to send a few details regarding the matter, to which I replied, "The children are in charge of the 3rd Class Matron and are being treated as ordinary passengers," and that ended the aerial correspondence.

It has always puzzled me why passengers, who are usually men of a certain amount of common sense, allow themselves to be fleeced by the professional gamblers who frequently cross in the large passenger steamers. Most of these gentlemen carry the trade-marks of their profession written all over their faces, and one would think that alone

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would prevent others from associating with them in any way, let alone from playing games of chance with them. There are exceptions, and I remember one man being pointed out to me who had the manners of the proverbial meek and mild curate, and dressed himself in a kind of a clerical costume to assist him in his business. For the first few days he played with the children on deck and so ingratiated himself with the parents, and I heard that he made a very good haul during the last day or so of the passage.

Most of them are well known to the office staff, and also to the ship's people, and I should think it must be a little disconcerting to them to be greeted by the Second Steward when making application for their seats at table with the remark, "What name this time, sir?" as very often happens. The police on either side of the Atlantic, too, inform us when they know that any of them are crossing.

We cannot refuse to carry them, as steamship companies are what is known as "common carriers," and by law are compelled to sell a ticket to anyone who has the money to pay for it and whose papers are in order, providing there is accommodation available in the ship. They usually book their passages at the last possible moment, in the hope, I presume, that the small single rooms would all be taken and they would be given larger ones, where they have a better opportunity for "plucking their pigeons." They very seldom succeed, however, in getting this accommodation.

As soon as the ship leaves the wharf they are amongst the first to apply to the Purser for an improvement in their cabins, which, of course, is never given, providing they are known.

Short of actually pointing them out to each individual, every effort is made on the ship to protect their fellow-passengers from them. Notices are printed in the pas-

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senger lists which everyone gets, and, in addition, notices are posted in the public rooms warning people not to play cards with people whom they don't know, as professional gamblers are known to be on board. Yet they somehow manage to ingratiate themselves, and I have had many complaints from passengers who have been fleeced. They seldom, if ever, play for high stakes in the smoke-room, that is usually done in their own state-rooms or in those of their victims.

Personally, I have no sympathy with anyone who loses money to them, and when they come to me for advice as to the best means of getting it back, I always say the same thing: "If you had taken my advice, or rather the company's, you would not have lost your money. The only thing to do, if you consider you have been swindled and have paid by cheque, is to stop the cheque by wireless and stand the consequences." Sometimes out of curiosity I ask them: "Would you have taken his money providing you had been allowed to win?" and they always answer: "Yes." They acknowledge, too, that they have read the notices warning them against playing with strangers, and sometimes add in mitigation of their foolishness: "But I had a few drinks before the smoke-room closed, and they followed me down to my room, and it was there I lost my money."

When the sharpers learn that some well-known spendthrift is going to Europe, and they do not know by which ship he will be travelling, I have heard of them going on shore at the last minute before the ship sailed, cancelling their passage, and repeating the operation till they finally run him to earth. "Ladies" have been known to act similarly on such occasions.

The proudest man that I think I have ever carried was a well-known gambler, "Doc." Owen by name. I think he is dead now.

It was some years ago that he embarked at Liverpool

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on the old *Majestic* carrying a large silver loving cup under his arm, which he said had been presented to him by his fellow-passengers on the *Celtic*, by which ship he had crossed to England, as a token of their regard for him. The inscription on the cup bore out his statement, and he never seemed to tire of showing it to everybody while he was with us, crew as well as passengers.

"Business is bad nowadays, especially on board ships," so one of the fraternity lately confided to a member of my crew. "What with the high rate of passage money and the little business there is to do, an honest gambler is hard put to it to make a living," he added. He also said that they were getting so well known on board the ships that "the most we can do is to get acquainted with the suckers on the way over and then meet them when we get on shore to attend to our business."

One morning when we were nearing the English Channel the Purser told me that a 2nd Class passenger had complained of being robbed and man-handled in a 1st Class passenger's room during the early hours of the morning, and wished to see me about it. I told him to bring him up, but before doing so he outlined the man's story to me and told me of the investigation he had made.

In due course the man was ushered into my room, accompanied by his wife—a handsome-looking woman much younger than he was—who was very voluble in her denunciation of her husband's foolishness in losing her ring. His first remark was: "I am in the show business," and the story he told was about the most absurd I have ever listened to in such a connexion, and for a man who said he was in such a business he showed an extraordinary amount of gullibility at being taken in so easily.

A fellow-passenger of his in the 2nd Class, who was evidently in league with the crooks in the 1st Class, asked him to go on the 1st Class deck for a good walk before going to bed. This was at about one o'clock in

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the morning, when the deck was practically clear of passengers. He went, and after walking for a few minutes his friend saw another man and said: "Hallo! there's a man I know. He is one of the biggest men in America, let's go over and talk to him." The three of them entered into conversation, and by and by another man made his appearance who was referred to as "one of the richest men in Chicago."

"He will be sure to have some whisky in his room," his friend said, "let's go over and see if we can't touch him for a drink." So "the pigeon" was lured to the snare. They all went down to the last man's room, where they were joined by other men, and after partaking of drinks, cards were produced and a game of poker was started, and he was very soon relieved of nearly all his money, some eight hundred dollars.

The next hand that was dealt to him was almost unbeatable, but he hesitated in playing it, until one of the other men who was not playing whispered to him: "I'll stake you for a thousand dollars on a hand like that." He accepted five hundred, and gave as security his wife's diamond ring which he was wearing "for safety's sake," and which was worth two hundred and forty pounds, so he said.

"You will get it back in a minute, as you can't be beaten," remarked the "friend in need."

When the show down came, of course he was beaten. He then accused them of passing a card and called them a lot of crooks, and finished up his long story by saying: "One of them then struck me and they fired me out in the passage-way."

I listened patiently to his story, and at the finish told him that I could do nothing in regard to getting either his money or ring back for him, but if he felt that he was in any danger from them I would see that he received protection. I also said to him: "I suppose you know that

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'the gentlemen' you were playing with deny ever having seen your ring, and they also accuse you of being a crook."

"I'm no crook. I'm in the show business," was his answer.

After further talk I promised that I would send a wireless message to Southampton for the police to meet the ship, and he could give the man he accused of striking him in charge if he liked, and that I would take care that he did not land at Cherbourg.

The rest of the gang disembarked at Cherbourg and the ring went with them, I suppose, as when he had the man arrested on our arrival at Southampton it could not be found.

He took the case to court but got no satisfaction, the magistrate dismissing it for lack of evidence.

CHAPTER XIX

A ROYAL FINISH

THE last trip! Well, it has been a full life. There have been thrills in it, moments of danger, hardships too.

But there come to me memories of good friendships and happy occasions. And as I lay aside according to the company's age-limit regulations to leave a rung on the ladder younger men will climb, I am grateful for what has been vouchsafed me. In saying farewell to the sea—in any capacity other than as a passenger—I shall indulge in no regrets, but will recall at this moment those occasions that have been outstandingly pleasant; and what more fitting memory to linger over than the visit the King and Queen paid to my ship in 1922?

We had made several successful voyages in the *Majestic* to New York, and docked at Southampton on the evening of August 4, 1922. Then we were informed that we were to leave again next morning and proceed to an anchorage off Cowes for the purpose of receiving Their Majesties, who had consented to pay the ship a visit.

Everybody on board was delighted to hear the news, and after our passengers had disembarked, special efforts were made to make the ship worthy of Their Majesties' inspection.

Mr. Sanderson, our Chairman, and Mr. Cauty, one of our Liverpool managers, who has the *Majestic* in his special care, together with our local manager, Mr. Curry, came on board as soon as we docked, to discuss the details of the visit so that everybody would know exactly what had to be done.

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Men worked all night getting the ship in order, and I am very happy to remember that their efforts brought forth Royal commendation on the cleanly state she was in, as the King remarked on it several times during his inspection, by saying to me: "How did you get her so clean, seeing that you only docked last night? I watched you passing up to dock."

We anchored in the appointed position at nine o'clock on Saturday morning, August 5. A memorable day in the annals of the White Star Line, and of the Merchant Service, as it is not very often we have had the privilege of receiving visits from the Royal Family. Shortly after we anchored, a Yeoman of Signals from the Royal Yacht came on board with the Royal Standard, which was broken at our mainmast head as His Majesty stepped on board. A unique honour for any ship in the Merchant Service, I think.

Promptly to the second, at 11 A.M., we saw the launch leave the Royal Yacht, and a few minutes later she was alongside the *Majestic*. As soon as the King stepped on board he put us at our ease by remarking on the strength of the tide that was running. After him came Her Majesty the Queen, followed by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, and Prince George, and the ladies and gentlemen in attendance, amongst whom I was very glad to see Captain H. Selwyn Day, one of His Majesty's Royal Naval Reserve Aides-de-Camp.

Mr. Sanderson received the Royal guests, and after he had presented a few of the head officials of the Line, and the officers of the ship, I had the honour of showing the way round the route that had been laid out as being most likely to give Their Majesties the best idea of the ship in the time that had been allotted to us for the purpose of their visit.

I have shown many people over ships, and I can truthfully say that I have never seen anyone take more

A Royal Finish

interest or give expression to more pleasure than the King and Queen did on that occasion. They asked many questions, some of which I could not answer. For instance, the King asked me how many electric lights there were in the ship. It has been my duty to see that a ship is properly lighted, and I have often asked for more to be placed, but, strange to say, I have never had the curiosity to find out how many there actually were in any ship.

With most people I would probably have made a wild guess, but remembering His Majesty's training in the Navy, I refrained from doing that, as I felt that he probably knew as much, if not more, about the subject of lighting than I did, and therefore could have made a better guess.

Her Majesty the Queen took a very keen interest in the domestic arrangements of the ship, and when they were in the 1st Class pantry looking at the various gadgets, one member of their suite—Sir Charles Cust, I think it was—suggested to me that it might be as well to try to hurry them on as time was flying, so I asked if they were ready. The King appeared willing, but the Queen said, "Not yet," or something like that, and then, turning to the Chief Pantryman—an old soldier, by the way—said, "Where is the other thing you were going to show me?" The "other thing" turned out to be a tin-opener of an ingenious design, which, after opening a tin of any size, as the Pantryman demonstrated, turned the edges in so that there was no danger of cutting the fingers.

After a very thorough inspection of the 1st and 2nd Class accommodation, which included the larger suites of rooms on C Deck, about which I have already told a story, and which the King specially desired to see, they asked to see the 3rd Class accommodation. This was not in the itinerary we had mapped out, so I took them there with more or less trepidation, as I was not sure that, in the limited time we had at our disposal, it had

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been put in the good order one would wish it to be for such visitors. However, it turned out to be just as clean as the rest of the ship, so my mind was relieved.

On the way round they took a look down the engine-room from the platform on E Deck, where Mr. Wolff, Chief Engineer, had posted himself in order to be ready to answer any questions, or to take them below in the elevator should they express a wish to go.

After visiting the public rooms they went on the bridge to get a comprehensive view of the ship and to see the various novelties, I might call them, that had been installed there. The King took a very great interest in everything, especially in the Clay's patent device for locking the wheel, so that the helmsman cannot turn it in any way other than that ordered, and in the "Clear View Screens," pieces of glass revolving at a high rate of speed which throw off rain or snow so that the glass remains clear under all conditions of weather. I did not think the Queen was so favourably impressed with it as he was, as when he showed it to her she said, "It is no better than the squeegees we have on our car."

We also gave a demonstration of boat-lowering, one being lowered into the water with the crew in it. It went down so quickly that it caused His Majesty to say to me, "You would not lower passengers as rapidly as that, would you?" to which I ventured to reply that I hoped we would never have occasion to lower them with passengers in at any time. Needless to say, the boat was under perfect control all the time, as was shown by its being stopped level with B Deck, where the people could be put into it, and again when it was within a few inches of the water, for the purpose of slipping it from the falls.

His Majesty, when he was in my quarters, which are practically on the bridge, congratulated me on them, and graciously promised to send me photographs of himself



THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN ON THEIR VISIT TO THE MAJESTIC

A Royal Finish

and the Queen to put in them. They are now amongst my most treasured possessions, and are in the position of honour on the mantelpiece in my sitting-room.

Yes, we have mantelpieces on ships nowadays, though I am glad to say we do not burn coal in the fireplaces, so we are not bothered by them smoking as so often is the case on shore.

Both the King and Queen were very interested in the system for fire detection, which I daresay is the most complete that there is in any ship afloat. We gave a demonstration of it for them by sending a man to smoke a cigarette in the aftermost section of the ship, and in about a minute from the time he had lighted it, the smoke was seen coming through the pipe that led from the compartment to the cabinet in the vicinity of the bridge.

After light refreshments had been served in the restaurant, which I was told Prince George in particular enjoyed, and signing their names in the ship's autograph book, the Royal party left the ship at about one o'clock.

Their Majesties graciously gave expression to the pleasure their visit had given them to Mr. Sanderson before going down the gangway ladder.

The ship's company was inspected on A Deck during their visit, and remained on that deck till they left the ship. As the Royal launch got clear of the gangway, Mr. Sanderson, who had been "all smiles" up to then, said either to himself or to me, I don't know which, "There! I knew something would go wrong." Guessing what was in his mind, I replied, "Give them a minute, sir." I had hardly got the words out of my mouth when three rousing cheers rang out from the upper deck, which the King graciously acknowledged, and Mr. Sanderson was "all smiles again."

Mr. Sanderson had lately been elected a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron, so took advantage of the ship being at anchor off Cowes to entertain a number of his

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fellow-members to lunch, and later I should think that every member of the squadron paid us a visit.

At about five o'clock the ship was cleared of visitors, and at six we had the honour of receiving Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrice together with a party of her friends on board, and of showing them the public rooms and some of the principal state-rooms. Their visit only lasted about an hour, and brought to a close "The Royal Visit to the *Majestic*."

God bless our King and Queen; they had given us a very happy day which will always live in our memories, and be spoken of as long as the *Majestic* remains a ship, and any of her crew who were privileged to be on board on that day are sailing in her.

"Everything had gone without a hitch," as Mr. Sander-son was kind enough to say to us before he left the ship to go to his yacht—tired, but full of satisfaction, I should say he was.

We weighed anchor about nine o'clock the same evening, and returned to Southampton, and sailed for New York on the following Wednesday with two very fine photographs of our King and Queen, which they had graciously presented to the ship as a memento of their visit, adorning our main companionway on B Deck. They have proved to be a continual source of interest to the many passengers we have since carried, as well as to the innumerable people who have visited the ship on both sides of the Atlantic.

L'ENVOI

The ship is safely in her berth at Southampton. The last voyage is done. A nervous time, a good finish, for not often has the crossing been more trying. Perhaps it was the wish to get the passengers and ship's company home for Christmas, but also we ran into dirty weather, and there was the strain that of all things I wanted no untoward incident on the final crossing. Well, all has gone well. Indeed, how splendidly! How memorable have been the last few days!

Presents—and, what is more, good will—from everyone. Before sailing from New York the officers and men on the Sailing Department Articles presented me with the very latest sumptuously fitted innovation trunk. On sailing day the president of the Sandy Hook Pilots' Association came down with some of his confrères and gave me a gold-mounted walking-stick, and presented a letter mentioning our long association together. I have a notion this was unique in the service, and few things have touched me more.

I want to say a thank-you to everybody. One parting present I appreciated was the effort of the engineers of the *Majestic*. They collected a sum of money, and then one among them, knowing me, thought I would prefer that the money should go to one of their members who was ill and in low water. That's the way of the sea, thank God! But the Chief had to bring his own gift just as a reminder.

L'Envoi

From the Catering Department a magnificently fitted wardrobe and a silver fitted dressing-case. From the Chief Stewardess (a woman of great courage, three times wrecked) also a gift. And others there is no space to enumerate. But I shall treasure them; I shall look at them and let them—how easy it will be!—bring back the great days when in such good company I went down to the sea in ships.

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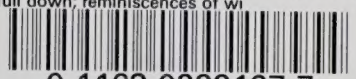
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